

A
SIMPLE STORY.

IN

TWO VOLUMES.

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

VOL. I

D U B L I N :

PRINTED BY WILLIAM PORTER,

FOR W. WILSON, P. WOGAN, P. BYRNE, W. M'KENZIE,

J. MOORE, J. JONES, J. HALPEN, A. GRUEBER,

W. JONES, R. WHITE, G. DRAPER, J. RICE.

M.DCC.XCI.

P R E F A C E.

IT is said, *a book should be read with the same spirit with which it has been written.* In that case, fatal must be the reception of this—for the writer frankly avows, that during the time she has been writing it, she has suffered every quality and degree of weariness and lassitude, into which no other employment could have betrayed her.

It has been the destiny of the writer of this Story, to be occupied throughout her life, in what has the least suited either her inclination or capacity—with an invincible impediment in her speech, it was her lot for thirteen years to gain a subsistence by public speaking—and, with the utmost detestation to the fatigue of inventing, a constitution suffering under a sedentary life,

and an education confined to the narrow boundaries prescribed her sex, it has been her fate to devote a tedious seven years to the unremitting labour of literary productions—whilst a taste for authors of the first rank has been an additional punishment, forbidding her one moment of those self-approving reflections which are assuredly due to the industrious.—But, alas ! in the exercise of the arts, industry scarce bears the name of merit.—What then is to be substituted in the place of genius ? GOOD FORTUNE.—And if these volumes should be attended by the good fortune that has accompanied her other writings, to that divinity, and that alone, she shall attribute their success.

Yet, there is a *first cause* still, to whom I cannot here forbear to mention my obligations.

The Muses, I trust, will pardon me, that to them I do not feel myself obliged—for, in justice to their heavenly inspirations, I believe they have never yet favoured me with one visitation ; but sent in their disguise

guise NECESSITY, who, being the Mother of Invention, gave me all mine—while FORTUNE kindly smiled, and was accessory to the cheat.

But this important secret I long wished, and endeavoured to conceal; yet one unlucky moment candidly, though unwittingly, divulged it—I frankly owned, “That Fortune having chased away Necessity, there remained no other incitement to stimulate me to a labour I abhorred.”—It happened to be in the power of the person to whom I confided this secret, to send NECESSITY once more.—Once more, then, bowing to its empire, I submit to the task it enjoins.

This case has something similar to a theatrical anecdote told (I think) by Colly Cibber:

“A performer of a very mean salary,
 “played the Apothecary in Romeo and
 “Juliet so exactly to the satisfaction of the
 “audience, that this little part, independent
 “of the other characters, drew immense
 “houses whenever the play was

“ performed—The manager, in consequence, thought it but justice to advance the actor’s salary ; on which the poor man (who, like the character he represented, had been half starved before) began to live so comfortably, he became too plump for the part ; and being of no importance in any thing else, the manager of course now wholly discharged him—and thus, actually reducing him to the want of a piece of bread, in a short time he became a proper figure for the part again.”

Welcome, then, thou all-powerful principle, NECESSITY !—THOU, who art the instigator of so many bad authors and actors—but, to their shame, not of all :—THOU, who from my infancy seldom hast forsaken me, still abide with me.—I will not complain of any hardship thy commands require, so thou dost not urge my pen to prostitution.—In all thy rigour, oh ! do not force my toil to libels—or, what is equally pernicious—panegyric on the unworthy !

A SIMPLE

A

S I M P L E S T O R Y.

C H A P T E R I.

DORRIFORTH bred at St. Omer's in all the scholastic rigour of that college, was by education, and the solemn vows of his order, a Roman Catholic priest—but nicely discriminating between the philosophical and the superstitious part of that character, and adopting the former only, he possessed qualities not unworthy the first professors of Christianity—every virtue which it was his vocation to preach, it was his care to practise; nor was he in the class of those of the religious, who, by secluding themselves from the world, fly the merit they might have in reforming mankind. He refused to shelter himself from the temptations of

the layman by the walls of a cloister, but sought for, and found that shelter in the centre of London, where he dwelt, in his own prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

He was about thirty, and had lived in the metropolis near five years, when a gentleman, above his own age, but with whom he had from his youth contracted a most sincere friendship, died, and left him the sole guardian of his daughter, a young lady of eighteen.

The deceased Mr. Milner, on his approaching dissolution, perfectly sensible of his state, thus reasoned to himself before he made the nomination: "I have formed no intimate friendship during my whole life, except one—I can be said to know the heart of no man except the heart of Dorriforth—After knowing this, I never sought acquaintance with another—I did not wish to lessen the exalted estimation of human nature he had inspired. In this moment of trembling apprehension from every thought that darts across my mind, much more for every action which soon I must be called to answer for; all worldly views here thrown aside, I act as if that
tribunal

tribunal before which I every moment expect to appear, were now sitting in judgment upon my purpose.—The care of an only child is the great charge that in this tremendous crisis I have to execute—these earthly affections that bind me to her by custom, sympathy, or what I fondly call parental love, would direct me to study her present happiness, and leave her to the care of some of those she styles her dearest friends; but they are friends only in the sunshine of fortune; in the cold nipping frost of disappointment, sickness, or conjugal strife, they will forsake the house of care, although the house which they themselves may have built.”

Here the excruciating anguish of the father, overcame that of the dying man.

“In the moment of desertion,” continued he, “which I now picture to myself, where will my child find comfort?—That heavenly aid religion gives, which now, amidst these agonizing tortures, cheers with the bright ray of consolation my frightened soul; that, she will be denied.”

It is in this place proper to remark, that Mr. Milner was a member of the church of Rome, but on his marriage with a lady of

Protestant tenets, they mutually agreed their sons should be educated in the religious opinion of their father, and their daughters in that of their mother. One child only was the result of their union, the child whose future welfare now occupied the thoughts of her expiring father—from him the care of her education had been withheld, as he kept inviolate the promise made to her departed mother on the article of religion, and therefore consigned his daughter to a Protestant boarding-school, from whence she was sent with merely such sentiments of religion, as young ladies of fashion mostly imbibe. Her little heart employed in all the endless pursuits of personal accomplishments, had left her mind without one ornament, except those which nature gave, and even they were not wholly preserved from the ravages made by its rival, *Art*.

While her father was in health he beheld with the extreme of delight, his accomplished daughter without one fault with which taste or elegance could have reproached her, nor ever enquired what might be her other failings—Cast on a bed of sickness, and upon the point of leaving her

her to her future fate, those failings at once rushed on his memory—and all the pride, the fond enjoyment he had taken in beholding her open the ball, or delight her hearers with her sprightly wit, escaped his remembrance; or not escaping, were thought of with a sigh of contrition, or at best a contemptuous frown, at the frivolous qualification.

“Something more essential,” said he to himself, “must be considered—something to prepare her for an hour like this I now experience—can I then leave her to the charge of those who themselves never remember such an hour will come?—Dorriforth is the only person I know, who, uniting every moral virtue to those of religion, and native honour to pious faith; will protect without controuling, instruct without tyrannizing, comfort without flattering, and perhaps in time make good by choice rather than by constraint, the dear object of his dying friend’s sole care.”

Dorriforth, who came post from London to visit Mr. Milner in his illness, received a few moments before his death all his injunctions, and promised to fulfil them—but in this last token of Mr. Milner’s

perfect esteem of his friend, he still restrained him from all authority to direct his ward in one religious opinion contrary to those her mother had professed, and in which she herself had been educated.

“ Never perplex her mind with an idea that may disturb, but cannot reform ”— were his latest words, and Dorriforth’s reply gave him entire satisfaction.

Miss Milner was not with her father at this affecting period—some delicately nervous friend, with whom she was on a visit at Bath, thought proper to conceal from her not only the danger of his death, but even his indisposition, lest it might alarm a mind she thought too susceptible. This refined tenderness gave poor Miss Milner the almost insupportable agony, of hearing her father was no more, even before she was told he was not in health. In the bitterest anguish she flew to pay her last duty to his remains, and performed it with the truest filial love, while Dorriforth, upon important business, was obliged to return to town.

CHAPTER II.

DORRIFORTH returned to London heavily afflicted for the loss of his friend, and yet perhaps with his thoughts more engaged upon the trust that friend had reposed in him. He knew the life Miss Milner had been accustomed to lead; he dreaded the repulses his admonitions might possibly meet from her; and feared he had undertaken a task he was too weak to execute—the protection of a young woman of fashion.

Mr. Dorriforth was nearly related to one of our first Catholic peers; his income was by no means confined, but approaching to affluence, yet his attention to those in poverty, and the moderation of his own desires were such, that he lived in all the careful plainness of œconomy—his habitation was in the house of a Mrs. Horton, an elderly lady, who had a maiden niece residing with her not many years younger than herself—But although Miss Woodley was thirty, and in person exceedingly plain, yet she possessed such an extreme chearfulness of temper, and such an inexhaustible fund

fund of good nature, that she escaped not only the ridicule, but even the appellation, of an old maid.

In this house Dorriforth had lived before the death of Mr. Horton, nor upon that event did he think it necessary, notwithstanding his religious vow of celibacy, to fly the roof of two such unseductive innocent females as Mrs. Horton and her niece — on their part, they regarded him with all that respect and reverence the most religious flock regards its pastor; and his friendly society they not only esteemed a spiritual, but a temporal advantage, as the liberal stipend he allowed for his apartments and board enabled them to continue in the large and commodious house, where they had resided during the life of Mr. Horton.

Here, upon Mr. Dorriforth's return from his journey, preparations were made for the reception of his ward, her father having made it one of his requests that she might, for a time at least, dwell in the same house with her guardian, receive the same visits, and cultivate the acquaintance of his acquaintances and friends.

When the will of her father was made known to Miss Milner, she submitted without

out the smallest reluctance to all he had required—her mind, at that time impressed with the most poignant sorrow for his loss, made no distinction of happiness that was to come; and the day was appointed, with her silent acquiescence, when she was to arrive in London, and take up her abode at Mrs. Horton's, with all the retinue of a rich heiress.

Mrs. Horton was delighted with the addition this acquisition to her family was likely to make to her annual income, and to the style of her living.—The goodnatured Miss Woodley was overjoyed at the expectation of their new guest, yet she herself could not tell why—but the reason was, her kind heart wanted more ample field for its benevolence; and now her thoughts were all pleasingly employed how she should render, not only the lady herself, but even all her attendants, happy in their new situation.

The thoughts of Dorriforth were less agreeably engaged—Cares, doubts, fears, possessed his mind—so forcibly possessed it, that upon every occasion which offered, he would inquisitively try to gain intelligence of his ward's disposition before he saw her;
for

for he was, as yet, a stranger not only to the real propensities of her mind, but even to her person; a constant round of visits having prevented his meeting her at her father's, the very few times he had been at his house, since her return from boarding-school. The first person whose opinion he, with all proper reserve, asked concerning Miss Milner was lady Evans, the widow of a baronet who frequently visited at Mrs. Horton's.

But that the reader may be interested in what Dorriforth says and does, it is necessary to give some description of his person and manners. His figure was tall and elegant, but his face, except a pair of dark bright eyes, a set of white teeth, and a graceful fall in his clerical curls of dark brown hair, had not one feature to excite admiration—he possessed notwithstanding such a gleam of sensibility diffused over each, that many people mistook his face for handsome, and all were more or less attracted by it—in a word, the charm that is here meant to be described is a countenance—on his countenance you beheld the feelings of his heart—saw all its inmost workings—the quick pulses
that

that beat with hope and fear, or the placid ones that were stationary with patient resignation. On this countenance his thoughts were pictured, and as his mind was enriched with every virtue that could make it valuable, so was his honest face adorned with every emblem of those virtues—and they not only gave a lustre to his aspect, but added a harmonious sound to all he uttered; it was persuasive, it was perfect eloquence, whilst in his looks you beheld his thoughts moving with his lips, and ever coinciding with what he said.

With one of those interesting looks which revealed the anxiety of his heart, and with that graceful restraint of all gesticulation, for which he was remarkable even in his most anxious concerns, he addressed lady Evans who had called on Mrs. Horton to hear and to tell the news of the day: “Your ladyship was at Bath last spring—you know the young lady to whom I have the honour of being appointed guardian.—Pray”—

He was earnestly intent upon asking a question, but was prevented by her ladyship.

“Dear

“ Dear Mr. Dorriforth, do not ask me any thing about the lady—when I saw her she was very young ; though indeed that is but three months ago, and she can’t be much older now.”

“ She is eighteen,” answered Dorriforth, colouring with regret at the doubts her ladyship had increased, but not inspired.

“ And she is very beautiful, that I can assure you,” replied her ladyship.

“ Which I call no qualification,” said Dorriforth, rising from his seat in evident uneasiness.

“ But where there is nothing else,” returned lady Evans ; “ let me tell you, beauty is something.”

“ Much worse than nothing, in my opinion,” returned Dorriforth.

“ But now, Mr. Dorriforth, do not from what I have said, frighten yourself, and imagine the young lady worse than she really is—all I know of her, is merely that she’s a young, idle, indiscreet, giddy girl, with half a dozen lovers in her suite ; some coxcombs, some men of gallantry, some single, and some married.”

Dorriforth

Dorriforth started.—“For the first time of my life,” cried he with a manly sorrow, “I wish I had never known her father.”

“Nay,” said Mrs. Horton, who expected every thing to happen just as she wished, (for neither an excellent education, the best company, or long experience had been able to cultivate or brighten this good lady’s understanding.) “Nay,” said she, “I am sure, Mr. Dorriforth, you will soon convert her from all her evil ways.”

“Dear me,” returned lady Evans, “I am sure I never meant to hint at any thing evil—and for what I have said, I will give you up my authors if you please; for they were not observations of my own; all I do is to mention them again.”

The good natured Miss Woodley, who sat working at the window, an humble listener to this discourse, ventured on this to say exactly six words: “Then don’t mention them any more.”

“Let us change the subject,” said Dorriforth.

“With all my heart,” cried her ladyship, “and I am sure it will be to the young lady’s advantage.”

“Is

“Is she tall, or short?” asked Mrs. Horton, still wishing for farther information.

“Oh, tall enough of all conscience,” returned lady Evans; “I tell you again there is no fault can be found with her person.”

“But if her mind is defective”—exclaimed Dorriforth with a sigh—

“—That may be improved as well as the person,” cried Miss Woodley.

“No my dear,” returned her ladyship, “I never heard of a pad to make strait an ill-shapen disposition.”

“O yes, lady Evans,” answered Miss Woodley; “good company, good books, experience, and the misfortunes of others, may have more power to form the mind to virtue, than”——

“Her ladyship would not suffer her to go on, but rising hastily from her seat, cried, “I must be gone—I have fifty people waiting for me at home—besides, were I inclined to hear a sermon, I should desire Mr. Dorriforth to preach, and not you.”

Just then Mrs. Hillgrave was announced. —“And here is Mrs. Hillgrave,”—Continued lady Evans—“I believe Mrs. Hillgrave

grave you know Miss Milner, don't you? The young lady who has lately lost her father."

Mrs. Hillgrave was the wife of a merchant who had met with some severe losses, and as soon as the name of Miss Milner was uttered, she lifted up her hands, and the tears started in her eyes.

"There!" cried lady Evans, "I desire you will give your opinion of her, and I am sorry I cannot stay to hear it." Saying this, she courtied and took her leave.

When Mrs. Hillgrave had been seated a few minutes, Mrs. Horton, who loved information equal to the most inquisitive of her sex, begged that lady,—“if she might be permitted to know, why, at the mention of Miss Milner, she had seemed so much affected?”

This question interesting the fears of Dorriforth, he turned anxiously round attentive to the reply.

“Miss Milner,” answered she, “has been my benefactress, and the best I ever had.” As she spoke, she took out her handkerchief and wiped away the tears that ran down her face.

“How

“How so?” cried Dorriforth eagerly, with his eyes moistened with joy, nearly as much as her’s were with gratitude.

“My husband, at the commencement of his distresses,” replied Mrs. Hillgrave, “owed a sum of money to her father, and from repeated provocations, Mr. Milner was determined to seize upon all our effects—his daughter, however, procured us time in order to discharge the debt; and when she found that time was insufficient, and her father no longer to be dissuaded from his intention, she secretly sold some of her most valuable ornaments to satisfy his demand and screen us from its consequences.”

Dorriforth, pleased at this recital, took Mrs. Hillgrave by the hand, and told her “she should never want a friend.”

“Is Miss Milner tall, or short?” again asked Mrs. Horton, fearing from the sudden pause which had ensued the subject should be dropped.

“I don’t know,” answered Mrs. Hillgrave.

“Is she handsome, or ugly?”

“I really can’t tell.”

“It is very strange you should not take notice!”

“I did

“ I did take notice, but I cannot depend upon my own judgment—to me she appeared beautiful as an angel, but perhaps I was deceived by the beauties of her disposition.”

CHAPTER III.

THIS gentlewoman's visit inspired Mr. Dorriforth with some confidence in the principles and character of his ward.—The day arrived on which she was to leave her father's seat, to take up her abode at Mrs. Horton's; and he, accompanied by Miss Woodley, went in his carriage to meet her, and waited at an inn on the road for her reception.

After many a sigh paid to the memory of her father, Miss Milner, upon the tenth of November, arrived at the place, half way on her journey to town, where Dorriforth and Miss Woodley were expecting her.—Besides attendants, she had with her a gentleman and a lady, distant relations of her mother's, who thought it but a proper testimony of their civility to attend her

her part of the way, but who so much envied her guardian the trust Mr. Milner had reposed in him, that as soon as they had delivered her safe into his care they returned.

When the carriage which brought Miss Milner stopped at the inn gate, and her name was announced to Dorriforth, he turned pale—something like a foreboding of disaster trembled at his heart, and consequently darted over all his face.—Miss Woodley was even obliged to rouse him from the dejection into which he was cast, or he would have sunk beneath it—she was obliged also to be the first to welcome his lovely charge.—Lovely beyond description.

But the sprightly vivacity, the natural gaiety, which report had given to Miss Milner, were softened by her recent sorrow to a meek sadness—and that haughty display of charms, imputed to her manners, was changed to a pensive demeanor.—The instant Dorriforth was introduced to her by Miss Woodley as her “Guardian, and her deceased father’s most beloved friend,” she burst into a flood of tears, knelt down to him for a moment, and promised

mised ever to obey him as her father.—He had his handkerchief to his face at the time, or she would have beheld the agitation of his heart—the remotest sensations of his soul.

This affecting introduction being over, and some minutes passed in general conversation, the carriages were again ordered, and, bidding farewell to the friends who had accompanied her, Miss Milner, her guardian, and Miss Woodley departed for town; the two ladies in Miss Milner's carriage, and Dorriforth in that in which he came.

Miss Woodley, as they rode along, made no attempts to ingratiate herself with Miss Milner; though, perhaps it might constitute one of her first wishes—she behaved to her but as she constantly behaved to every other creature—that was sufficient to gain the esteem of one, possessed of an understanding equal to this young lady's—she had penetration to discover Miss Woodley's unaffected worth, and was soon induced to reward it with the warmest friendship.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER a night's rest in London, less strongly impressed with the loss of her father, reconciled, if not already attached to her new acquaintance, her thoughts pleasingly occupied with the reflection she was in that gay metropolis—a wild rapturous picture of which her active fancy had often formed—Miss Milner arose from a peaceful and refreshing sleep, with much of that vivacity, and all those airy charms, which for a while had yielded their transcendent power, to less potent sadness.

Beautiful as she had appeared to Miss Woodley and to Dorriforth the preceding day, when she joined them the next morning at breakfast, repossessed of her lively elegance and dignified simplicity, they gazed at her, and at each other alternately, with wonder!—and Mrs. Horton, as she sat at the head of her tea-table, felt herself but as a menial servant, such command has beauty if united with sense and with virtue.—In Miss Milner it was so united.

—Yet

—Yet let not our over-scrupulous readers be misled, and extend their idea of her virtue so as to magnify it beyond that which frail mortals commonly possess; nor must they cavil, if, on a nearer view, they find it less—but let them consider, that if Miss Milner had more faults than generally belong to others, she had likewise more temptations.

From her infancy she had been indulged in all her wishes to the extreme of folly, and habitually started at the unpleasant voice of controul—she was beautiful, she had been too frequently told the high value of that beauty, and thought those moments passed in wasteful idleness during which she was not gaining some new conquest—she had besides a quick sensibility, which too frequently discovered itself in the immediate resentment of injury or neglect—she had acquired also the dangerous character of a wit; but to which she had no real pretensions, although the most discerning critic, hearing her converse, might fall into this mistake.—Her replies had all the effect of repartee, not because she possessed those qualities which can properly be called wit, but that what she said was spoken

with an energy, an instantaneous and powerful perception of what she said, joined with a real or well-counterfeited simplicity, a quick turn of the eye, and an arch smile of the countenance.—Her words were but the words of others, and, like those of others, put into common sentences; but the delivery made them pass for wit, as grace, in an ill proportioned figure, will often make it pass for symmetry.

And now——leaving description—the reader must form a judgment of her by her actions; by all the round of great or trivial circumstances that shall be related.

At breakfast, which was just begun at the beginning of this chapter, the conversation was lively on the part of Miss Milner, wise on the part of Dorriforth, good on the part of Miss Woodley, and an endeavour at all three on the part of Mrs. Horton.—The discourse at length drew from Mr. Dorriforth this observation.

“ You have a greater resemblance of your father, Miss Milner, than I imagined you had from report: I did not expect to find you so like him.”

“ Nor did I, Mr. Dorriforth, expect to find you any thing like what you are.”

“ No?

“ No?—pray, madam, what did you expect to find me?”

“ I expected to find you an elderly man, and a plain man.”

This was spoken in an artless manner, but in a tone which obviously declared she thought her guardian both young and handsome.—He replied, but not without some little embarrassment, “ A plain man you shall find me in all my actions.”

She returned, “ Then your actions are to contradict your looks.”

For in what she said, Miss Milner had the quality peculiar to wits, to speak the thought that first occurs, which thought has generally truth on its side.—On this he ventured to pay her a compliment in return.

“ You, Miss Milner, I should suppose, must be a very bad judge of what is plain, and what is not.”

“ How so, Sir?”

“ Because I am sure you will readily own you do not think yourself handsome; and allowing that, you instantly want judgment.”

B 2

“ And

“ And I would rather want judgment than beauty,” she replied ; “ and so I give up the one for the other.”

With a serious face, as if proposing a most serious question, Dorriforth continued, “ And you really believe you are not handsome ?”

“ I should from my own opinion believe so, but in some respects I am like you, Roman Catholics ; I don’t believe from my own understanding, but from what other people tell me.”

“ And let this be the criterion,” replied Dorriforth, “ that what we teach is truth ; for you find you would be deceived did you not trust to persons who know better than yourself.—But, my dear Miss Milner, we will talk upon some other topic, and never resume this again—we differ in opinion, I dare say, on one subject only, and this difference I hope will never extend itself to any other.—Therefore, let not religion be named between us ; for as I have resolved never to persecute you, in pity be grateful, and do not persecute me.”

Miss Milner looked with surprise that any thing so lightly said, should be so seriously received.—The kind Miss Woodley ejaculated

ejaculated a short prayer to herself, that heaven would forgive her young friend the involuntary sin of ignorance—while Mrs. Horton, unperceived as she imagined, made the sign of the cross upon her forehead to prevent the infectious taint of Heretical opinions. This pious ceremony Miss Milner, by chance, observed, and now shewed such an evident propensity to burst into a fit of laughter, that the good lady of the house could no longer contain her resentment, but exclaimed, “God forgive you.” With a severity so far different from the idea the words conveyed, that the object of her anger was, on this, obliged freely to indulge that risibility which she had been struggling to smother; and without longer suffering under the agony of restraint, she gave way to her humour, and laughed with a liberty so uncontrouled, that in a short time left her in the room with none but the tender-hearted Miss Woodley a witness of her folly.

“My dear Miss Woodley,” (then cried Miss Milner, after recovering herself,) “I am afraid you will not forgive me.”

B 3

“No,

“No, indeed I will not” returned Miss Woodley.

But how unimportant, how weak, how ineffectual are *words* in conversation—looks and manners alone express—for Miss Woodley, with her charitable face and mild accents, saying she would not forgive, implied only forgiveness—while Mrs. Horton, with her enraged voice and aspect, begging heaven to pardon the offender, palpably said, she thought her unworthy of all pardon.

CHAPTER V.

SIX weeks have now elapsed since Miss Milner has been in London, partaking with delight in all its pleasures, whilst Doriforth has been fighting with apprehensions, attending with precaution, and praying with the most zealous fervour for her safety.—Her own and her guardian’s acquaintance, and the new friendships (to speak in the unmeaning language of the world) which she was continually forming, crowded so

so perpetually to the house, that seldom had Dorriforth even a moment left from her visits or visitors, to warn her of her danger—yet when a moment offered, he snatched it eagerly—pressed the necessity of “time not always passed in society; of reflection; of reading; of thoughts for a future state; and of virtues acquired to make old age supportable.”—That forcible power of innate feeling, which directs the tongue to eloquence, had its effect while she listened to him, and she sometimes put on the looks and gesture of assent, and sometimes even spoke the language of conviction; but this, the first call of dissipation would change to ill-timed raillery, or peevish remonstrance, at being limited in delights her birth and fortune entitled her to enjoy.

Among the many visitors who attended at her levees, and followed wherever she went, was one that seemed, even when absent, to share her thoughts.—This was Lord Frederick Lawnly, the son of a duke, and the avowed favourite of all the most discerning women of taste.

Lord Frederick was not more than twenty-three; sprightly, elegant, extreme-

ly handsome, and possessed of every accomplishment to captivate a heart less susceptible of love than Miss Milner's was supposed to be.—With these allurements, no wonder if she took a pleasure in his company—no wonder if she took a pride to have it known he was among the number of her most devoted admirers.—Dorriforth beheld the growing intimacy with alternate pain and pleasure—he wished to see Miss Milner married, to see his charge in the protection of another, rather than of himself: yet under the care of a young nobleman, immersed in all the vices of the town, without one moral excellence, but such as might result eventually from the influence of the moment—under such care he trembled for her happiness—yet trembled more lest her heart should be purloined, without even the authority of matrimonial views.

With these sentiments Dorriforth could never disguise his uneasiness at the sight of Lord Frederick, nor could his lordship but discern the suspicion of the guardian, and consequently each was embarrassed in the presence of the other.—Miss Milner observed, but observed with indifference, the sensations

sensations of both—there was but one passion which at present held a place in her heart, and that was vanity ; vanity defined into all the species of pride, vain-glory, self-approbation—an inordinate desire of admiration, and an immoderate enjoyment of the art of pleasing, for her own individual happiness, and not for the happiness of others—Still had she a heart inclined, and oftentimes affected, by tendencies less unworthy ; but those approaches to what was estimable, were generally arrested in their first impulse by some darling folly.

Miss Woodley (who could discover virtue, although of the most diminutive kind, and scarcely through the magnifying glass of calumny could ever perceive a fault) was Miss Milner's constant companion, and her advocate with Dorriforth, whenever, during her absence, she became the subject of discourse—he listened with hope to the praises of her friend, but saw with despair how little they were merited.—Sometimes he struggled to contain his anger, but oftener strove to suppress tears of pity for her hapless state.

By this time all her acquaintance had given Lord Frederick to her as a lover, the

servants whispered it, and some of the public prints had even fixed the day of marriage;—but as no explanation had taken place on the part of his lordship, Dorri-forth's uneasiness was encreased, and he seriously told his Ward he thought it prudent to entreat Lord Frederick to desist visiting her.—She smiled with ridicule at the caution, but finding it a second time repeated, and in a manner that favoured of authority, she promised to make, and to enforce, the request.—The next time his lordship came she did so, assuring him it was by her guardian's desire; “who from motives of delicacy had permitted her rather to solicit as a favour, what he himself would make as a demand.”—Lord Frederick reddened with anger—he loved Miss Milner, but he doubted whether (from the frequent proofs he had experienced of his own inconstancy) he should continue to love—and this interference of her guardian threatened an explanation or a dismissal, before he became thoroughly acquainted with his own heart.—Alarmed, confounded, and provoked, he replied,

“By

“ By heaven, I believe Mr. Dorriforth loves you himself, and it is jealousy makes him treat me thus.”

“ For shame, my lord!” cried Miss Woodley, who was present, and trembling with horror at the sacrilegious idea.

“ Nay, shame for him if he be not in love,”—answered his lordship; “ for what but a savage could behold beauty like her’s, and not own its power?”

“ Habit,” replied Miss Milner, “ is every thing—and Mr. Dorriforth sees and converses with beauty, and from habit does not fall in love, as you, my lord, merely from habit do.”

“ Then you believe,” cried he, “ love is not in my nature?”

“ No more of it, my lord, than habit could very soon extinguish.”

“ But I would not have it extinguished—I would rather it should mount to a flame, for I think it a crime to be insensible of the blessings love can bestow.”

“ Then your lordship indulges the passion to avoid a sin?—the very motive which deters Mr. Dorriforth.”

“ Which ought to deter him, madam, for the sake of his oaths—but monastic
vows,

vows, like those of marriage, were made to be broken—and surely when your guardian looks on you, his wishes”——

“Are never less pure,” returned Miss Milner eagerly, “than those which dwell in the bosom of my celestial guardian.”

At that instant Dorriforth entered the room. The colour had mounted into Miss Milner’s face from the warmth with which she had delivered her opinion, and his entering at the very moment this compliment had been paid in his absence, heightened the blush to a deep glow on every feature, and a confusion that trembled on her lips and shook through all her frame.

“What’s the matter?” cried Dorriforth, looking with concern on her discomposure.

“A compliment paid by herself to you, Sir,” replied his lordship, “has thus affected the lady.”

“As if she blushed at the untruth,” said Dorriforth.

“Nay, that is unkind,” cried Miss Woodley, “for if you had been here”——

“—I would not have said what I did,” replied Miss Milner, “but left him to vindicate himself.”

“Is

“ Is it possible I can want vindication ?” returned Dorriforth, “ Who would think it worth their while to slander so unimportant a person as I am ?”

“ The man who has the charge of Miss Milner,” replied Lord Frederick, “ derives a consequence from her.”

“ No ill consequence, I hope, my lord ?” replied Dorriforth with a firmness in his voice, and an eye fixed so stedfastly, that his lordship hesitated for a moment in want of a reply—and Miss Milner softly whispering to him, as her guardian turned his head, to avoid an argument, he bowed acquiescence.—And then, as in compliment to her, he wished to change the subject, with a smile of ridicule he cried,

“ I wish, Mr. Dorriforth, you would give me absolution of all my sins, for I confess they are many and manifold.”

“ Hold, my lord,” exclaimed Dorriforth, “ do not confess before the ladies, lest in order to excite their compassion, you should be tempted to accuse yourself of sins, you have never yet committed.”

At this Miss Milner laughed, seemingly
so

so well pleased, that Lord Frederick with a sarcastic sneer, repeated,

“ From Abelard it came,

“ And Heloisa still must love the name.”

Whether from an inattention to the quotation, or from a consciousness it was wholly inapplicable, Dorriforth heard it without one emotion of shame or of anger—while Miss Milner seemed shocked at the implication; her pleasantry was immediately depressed, and she threw open the sash and held her head out at the window, to conceal the embarrassment these lines had occasioned.

The Earl of Elmwood was at this juncture announced—a Catholic nobleman, just come of age, and on the eve of marriage—his lordship’s visit was to his cousin, Mr. Dorriforth, but as all ceremonious visits were alike received by Dorriforth, Miss Milner, and Mrs. Horton’s family in one common apartment, Lord Elmwood was ushered into this, and for the present directed the conversation to a different subject.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VI.

IN anxious desire that the affection, or acquaintance, between Lord Frederick Lawnly and Miss Milner might be finally broken, her guardian received with the highest satisfaction, overtures from Sir Edward Ashton, in behalf of his passion for that young lady.—Sir Edward was not young or handsome; old or ugly; but immensely rich, and possessed of qualities that made him, in every sense, worthy the happiness to which he aspired.—He was the man Dorriforth would have chosen before any other for the husband of his Ward, and his wishes made him sometimes hope, against his reason, that Sir Edward would not be rejected—and he resolved to try the force of his own power in the strongest commendation of him.

Notwithstanding that dissimilarity of opinion, which in almost every respect, subsisted between Miss Milner and her guardian, there was generally the most punctilious observance of good manners from each

each towards the other—on the part of Dorriforth more especially ; for his politeness would sometimes appear even like the result of a system he had marked out for himself, as the only means to keep his Ward restrained within the same limitations.—Whenever he addressed her there was an unusual reserve upon his countenance, and more than usual gentleness in his tone of voice ; which seemed the effect of sentiments her birth and situation inspired, joined to a studied mode of respect best suited to enforce the same from her.—The wished-for consequence was produced—for though there was an instinctive rectitude in the understanding of Miss Milner that would have taught her, without other instruction, what manners to observe towards her deputed father ; yet, from some volatile thought, or some quick sense of feeling, she had not been accustomed to subdue, she was perpetually on the verge of treating him with levity ; but he would immediately recall her recollection by a reserve too awful, and a gentleness too sacred for her to violate. The distinction which both required, was thus, by his skilful management alone, preserved.

One

One morning he took an opportunity, before her and Miss Woodley, to introduce and press the subject of Sir Edward Ashton's hopes. He first spoke warmly in his praise, then plainly told Miss Milner he believed she possessed the power to make so deserving a man happy to the summit of his wishes. A laugh of ridicule was the only answer,—but a sudden and expressive frown from Dorriforth having quickly put an end to it, he resumed his wonted politeness, and said,

“ I wish, Miss Milner, you would shew more good taste than thus pointedly to disapprove of Sir Edward.”

“ How, Mr. Dorriforth,” replied she, “ can you expect me to give proofs of a good taste, when Sir Edward, whom you consider with such high esteem, has given so bad an example of his, in approving of me ?”

Dorriforth wished not to flatter her frailty by a compliment she seemed to have sought for, and for a moment hesitated what to say.

“ Answer, Sir, that question,” she cried.

“ Why then, madam,” replied he, “ it
is

is my opinion, that supposing what your humility has advanced to be just, yet Sir Edward will not suffer by the suggestion; for in cases where the heart is so immediately concerned, as I believe Sir Edward's to be, good taste, or rather reason, has not proper power to act."

"You are right, Mr. Dorriforth; this is a thorough justification of Sir Edward—and when I fall in love, I must beg you will make the same excuse for me."

"Then," returned he earnestly, "before your heart is in that state I have described, exert your reason."

"I shall," answered she, "and not consent to marry a man whom I could never love."

"Unless your heart is already given away, Miss Milner, what can make you speak with such a degree of certainty?"

He thought on Lord Frederick while he said this, and he fixed his eyes upon her as if he wished to penetrate her sentiments, and yet trembled for what he might find there;—she blushed, and her looks would have confirmed her guilty, had not a free and unembarrassed tone of voice, more than her words, preserved her from that sentence.

"No,"

“ No,” she replied, “ my heart is not given away, and yet I can venture to declare Sir Edward will never possess an atom of it.”

“ I am sorry, for both your sakes, these are your sentiments,” he replied ; “ but as your heart is still your own,” (and he seemed rejoiced to find it was) “ permit me to warn you how you part with a thing so precious—the dangers, the sorrows you hazard in bestowing it, are greater than you may be aware of. The heart once gone, our thoughts, our actions, are no more our own, than that is.”——He seemed *forcing* himself to utter all this, and yet to break off as if he could have said much more, had not the extreme delicacy of the subject prevented him.

When he left the room, and Miss Milner heard the door shut after him, she said with a thoughtful and inquisitive earnestness, “ What can make good people so skilled in all the weaknesses of the bad? Mr. Dorriforth with all those prudent admonitions, appears rather like a man who has passed his life in the gay world, experienced all its dangerous allurements, all its repentant sorrows, than like one who
had

had lived his whole time secluded in a monastery or his own study.—Then he speaks with such exquisite sensibility on the subject of love, he commends the very thing he would decry.—I do not think my Lord Frederick could make the passion appear in more pleasing colours by painting its delights, than Mr. Dorriforth can in describing its sorrows—and if he talks to me frequently in this manner, I shall certainly take pity on his lordship, for the sake of his enemies eloquence.”

Miss Woodley, who heard the conclusion of this speech with the tenderest concern, cried, “ Alas! you then think seriously of Lord Frederick !”

“ Suppose I do, wherefore that *alas!* Miss Woodley ?”

“ Because I fear you will never be happy with him.”

“ That is plainly telling me he will not be happy with me.”

“ I cannot speak of marriage from experience,” answered Miss Woodley, “ but I think I can guess what it is.”

“ Nor can I speak of love from experience,” replied Miss Milner, “ but I think I can guess what it is.”

“ But

“ But do not fall in love, my dear Miss Milner,” (cried Miss Woodley, with an earnestness as if she had been asking a favour that depended upon the will of the person entreated,) “ do not fall in love without the approbation of your guardian.”

Her young friend laughed at the inefficacious prayer, but promised to do “ all she could to oblige her.”

CHAPTER VII.

SIR Edward, not wholly discouraged by the denial with which Dorriforth had, with delicacy, acquainted him, still hoped for a kinder reception, and was so frequently in the house of Mrs. Horton, that Lord Frederick's jealousy was excited, and the tortures he suffered in consequence, convinced him beyond a doubt of the sincerity of his affection. He now, every time he beheld the object of his passion, (for he still continued his visits, tho' less frequently than before) pleaded his cause so ardently, that Miss Woodley, who was occasionally present,

present, and ever compassionate, could scarce resist wishing him success. He now unequivocally offered marriage, and entreated to be suffered to lay his proposals before Mr. Dorriforth, but this Miss Milner positively forbid.

Her reluctance he imputed, however, more to the known partiality of her guardian to the addresses of Sir Edward, than to any motive which depended upon herself; and to Mr. Dorriforth his lordship conceived a greater dislike than ever; believing that through his interposition, in spite of his Ward's attachment, he might yet be deprived of her—but Miss Milner declared both to him and to her friend, Love had, at present, gained no one influence over her mind.—Yet did the watchful Miss Woodley oftentimes hear a sigh burst forth, unknowing to herself, till she was reminded of it, and then a sudden blush of shame would instantly spread over her face.—This seeming struggle with her passion, endeared her more than ever to Miss Woodley, and she would even risk the displeasure of Dorriforth by her ready compliance in every new pursuit that might amuse the time, she else saw passed by her friend in heaviness of heart.

Balls,

Balls, plays, incessant company, at length roused her guardian from that mildness with which he had been accustomed to treat her—night after night his sleep had been disturbed by fears for her safety while abroad; morning after morning it had been broken by the clamour of her return.—He therefore said to her one forenoon, as he met her accidentally upon the stair case,

“ I hope, Miss Milner, you pass this evening at home?”

Unprepared for the sudden question, she blushed and replied, “ Yes;” while she knew she was engaged to a brilliant assembly, for which she had been a whole week consulting her milliner in preparation.

She, however, flattered herself what she had said to Mr. Dorriforth might be excused as a slight mistake, the lapse of memory, or some other trifling fault, when he should know the truth—the truth was earlier divulged than she expected—for just as dinner was removed, her footman delivered a message to her from her milliner concerning a new dress for the evening—the *present evening* particularly marked.—Dorriforth looked astonished.

“ I thought, Miss Milner, you gave me
your

your word you would pass this evening at home?"

"I mistook then—for I had before given my word I should pass it abroad."

"Indeed!" cried he.

"Yes, indeed," returned she; "and I believe it is right I should keep my first promise; is it not?"

"The promise you gave me then, you do not think of any consequence."

"Yes, certainly; if you do."

"I do."

"And mean, perhaps, to make it of much more consequence than it deserves, by being offended."

"Whether or not, I am offended—you shall find I am." And he looked so.

She caught his piercing, steadfast eye—her's were immediately cast down; and she trembled—either with shame or with repentment.

Mrs. Horton rose from her seat—moved the decanters and the fruit round the table—stirred the fire—and came back to her seat again, before another word was uttered.—Nor had this good woman's officious labours taken the least from the awkwardness of the silence, which as soon as the bustle she

she had made was over, returned in its full force.

At last, Miss Milner, rising with alacrity, was preparing to go out of the room, when Dorriforth raised his voice, and in a tone of authority said,

“ Miss Milner, you shall not leave the house this evening.”

“ Sir ?”—she exclaimed with a kind of doubt of what she had heard—a surprise, which fixed her hand on the door she had half opened, but which now she shewed herself irresolute whether to open wide in defiance, or to shut submissive.—Before she could resolve, Dorriforth arose from his seat, and said with a degree of force and warmth she had never heard him speak with before,

“ I command you to stay at home this evening.”

And he walked immediately out of the apartment by the opposite door.—Her hand fell motionless from that she held—she appeared motionless herself for some time ;—till Mrs. Horton, “ beseeching her not to be uneasy at the treatment she had received,” caused a flood of tears to flow, and her bosom to heave as if her heart was breaking.

Miss Woodley would have said some-

thing to comfort her, but she had caught the infection and could not utter a word—not from any real cause of grief did this lady weep; but there was a magnetic quality in tears, which always drew forth her's.

Mrs. Horton secretly enjoyed this scene, although the real well meaning of her heart, and ease of her conscience, did not tell her so—she, however, declared she had “long prognosticated it would come to this;” and she “now only thanked heaven it was no worse.”

“What would you have worse, madam?” cried Miss Milner, “am not I disappointed of the ball?”

“You don't mean to go then?” said Mrs. Horton; “I commend your prudence; and I dare say it is more than your guardian gives you credit for.”

“Do you think I would go,” answered Miss Milner, with an earnestness that for a time suppressed her tears, “in contradiction to his will?”

“It is not the first time, I believe you have acted contrary to that, Miss Milner,” returned Mrs. Horton, and affected a tenderness of voice, to soften the harshness of her words.

“If

“ If that is the case, madam,” replied Miss Milner, “ I see nothing that should prevent me now.” And she flung out of the room as if she had resolved to disobey him.—This alarmed poor Miss Woodley.

“ Dear Aunt,” she cried to Mrs. Horton, “ follow and prevail upon Miss Milner to give up her design; she means to go to the ball in opposition to her guardian’s will.”

“ Then,” cried Mrs. Horton, “ I’ll not be an instrument in deterring her—if she does, it may be for the best; it may give Mr. Dorriforth a clearer knowledge what means are proper to use, to convert her from evil.”

“ But, dear madam, she must be prevented the evil of disobedience; and as you tempted, you will be the most likely to dissuade her—but if you will not, I must endeavour.”

Miss Woodley was leaving the room to perform this good design, when Mrs. Horton, in humble imitation of the example given by Dorriforth, cried,

“ Niece, I command you not to stir out of this room this evening.”

Miss Woodley obediently sat down—

and though her thoughts and heart were in the chamber with her friend, she never shewed by one impertinent word, or by one line of her face, the restraint she suffered.

At the usual hour, Mr. Dorriforth and his ward were summoned to tea :—Dorri-forth entered with a countenance which evinced the remains of anger ; his eye gave testimony of his absent thoughts ; and although he took up a pamphlet and affected to read, it was plain to discern he scarcely knew he held it in his hand.

Mrs. Horton began to make tea with a mind as wholly intent upon something else, as Dorriforth's—she was longing for the event of this misunderstanding, (for to age trivial matters are important,) and though she wished no ill to Miss Milner, yet with an inclination bent upon seeing something new—without the fatigue of going out of her own house—she was not over scrupulous what that novelty might be.—But for fear she should have the imprudence to speak a word upon the subject which employed her thoughts, or even look as if she thought of it at all ; she pinched her lips close together, and cast her eyes on vacancy, lest their significant regards might detect

detect her.—And for fear any noise should intercept even the sound of what might happen, she walked across the room more softly than usual, and more softly touched every thing she was obliged to lay her hand on.

Miss Woodley thought it her duty to be mute, and now the gingle of a tea-spoon, was like a deep-toned bell, all was so quiet.

Mrs. Horton too, in the self-approving reflection that she herself was not in any quarrel, or altercation of any kind, felt at this moment remarkably peaceful, and charitable.—Miss Woodley did not recollect *herself* so, but was so in reality—in her peace and charity were instinctive virtues, accident could not encrease them.

The first cups of tea were scarcely poured out, when a servant came with Miss Milner's compliments and she should drink none.—The book shook in Dorri-forth's hand while this message was delivered—he believed her to be dressing for her evening's entertainment, and now studied in what manner to prevent, or to resent it.—He coughed—drank his tea—endeavoured to talk, but found it difficult—sometimes read—and in this manner near

two hours were passed away, when Miss Milner came into the room.—Not dressed for ball, but as she rose from dinner.—Dorriforth read on, and seemed afraid to look up, lest he should behold what he could not have pardoned.—she drew a chair and sat down at the table by the side of Miss Woodley.

After a few minutes pause, and some small embarrassment on the part of Mrs. Horton, at the disappointment she had to contend with from Miss Milner's unexpected obedience, she asked that young lady "if she would now take tea?"—to which Miss Milner replied, "No, I thank you, ma'am," in a voice so languid, compared to her usual one, that Dorriforth lifted his eyes from the book; and seeing her in the same negligent dress she had worn all the day, cast them away again—not with a look of triumph, but of confusion.

And whatever he might have suffered had he beheld her decorated, and on the point of bidding defiance to his commands, yet even upon that trial, he had not endured half the painful sensations he now for a moment felt—he felt himself to blame.

He

He feared he had treated her with too much severity—he admired her condescension, accused himself for exacting it—he longed to ask her pardon, he did not know how.

A chearful reply from her, to a question of Miss Woodley's, embarrassed him still more—he wished she had been sullen, he then would have had a temptation, or a pretence, to have been so too.

With all these thoughts crowding fast on his mind he still read, or seemed to read, and to take no notice of what was passing; till a servant entered and asked Miss Milner what time she should want the chariot? to which she replied, “I don't go out to night.”—He then laid the book out of his hand, and by the time the servant had left the room, thus began:—

“Miss Milner, I give you, I fear, some unkind proofs of my regard—it is often the ungrateful task of a friend to be troublesome—sometimes unmannerly.—Forgive the duty of my office, and believe no one is half so much concerned if it robs you of any amusements, as I myself am.”

What he said, he looked with so much sincerity, that had she been burning with

rage at his behaviour, she must have forgiven him, for the regret he so forcibly expressed.—She was going to reply, but found she could not without accompanying her words with tears, therefore as soon as she attempted she desisted.

On this he rose from his seat, and going to her, said, “ Once more shew your submission by obeying me a second time to-day.—Keep your appointment, and be assured I shall issue my commands with greater circumspection for the future, as I find how strictly they are complied with.”

Miss Milner, the gay, the proud, the haughty Miss Milner, sunk underneath this kindness, and wept with a gentleness and patience, which did not give more surprise than it gave satisfaction to Dorriforth.—He was charmed to find her disposition so little untractable—foreboded the future prosperity of his guardianship, and her eternal as well as temporal happiness from this specimen.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALTHOUGH Dorriforth was that good man that has been described, there were in his nature shades of evil—there was an obstinacy ; such as he himself, and his friends termed firmness of mind ; but had not religion and some opposite virtues weighed heavy in the balance, it would frequently have degenerated into implacable stubbornness.

The child of a once beloved sister, who married a young officer against her brother's consent, was at the age of three years left an orphan, destitute of every support but from his uncle's generosity : but though Dorriforth mentioned, he would never see him. Miss Milner, whose heart was a receptacle for the unfortunate, no sooner was told the melancholy history of Mr. and Mrs. Rusbrook, the parents of the child, than she longed to behold the innocent inheritor of her guardian's resentment, and took Miss Woodley with her to see the boy—he was at a farm house a few miles from town ; and his extreme beauty

C 5

and

and engaging manners, needed not the sorrows to which he had been born, to give him farther recommendation to the kindness of her, who had come to visit him. She beheld him with admiration and pity, and having endeared herself to him by the most affectionate words and caresses, on her bidding him farewell, he cried most sorrowfully to go along with her. Unused to resist temptations, whether to reprehensible, or to laudable actions, she yielded to his supplications, and having overcome a few scruples of Miss Woodley's, determined to take young Rusbrook to town, and present him to his uncle. This idea was no sooner formed than executed.—By making a present to the nurse, she readily gained her consent to part with him for a day or two, and the signs of joy the child denoted on being put into the carriage, seemed to repay her before-hand, for every reproof she might receive from her guardian, for the liberty she had taken.

“ Besides,” said she to Miss Woodley, who had still her apprehensions, “ do you not wish his uncle should have some warmer interest in his care than duty?—it is that alone, which induces Mr. Dorriforth to provide

provide for him, but it is proper, affection should have some share in his benevolence—and how, hereafter, will he be so fit an object for that love, which compassion must excite, as he is at present?”

Miss Woodley acquiesced.—But before they arrived at their own door it came into Miss Milner's remembrance, there was a grave sternness in the manners of her guardian when provoked: the recollection of which, made her something apprehensive for what she had done—Miss Woodley was more so.—They both became silent as they approached the street where they lived—for Miss Woodley having once represented her fears, and having suppressed them in resignation to Miss Milner's better judgment, would not repeat them—and Miss Milner would not confess they were now troubling her.

Just, however, as the coach stopt, she had the forecast and the humility to say, “we will not tell Mr. Dorriforth the child is his nephew, Miss Woodley, unless he should appear fond, and pleased with him, and then we may venture without any danger.”

This was agreed, and when Dorriforth entered

entered the room just before dinner, poor Harry Rusbrook was introduced to him as the son of a lady who frequently visited there. The deception passed—Dorriforth shook hands with him, and at length highly pleased with his engaging wiles, and applicable replies, took him on his knee, and kissed him with affection. Miss Milner could scarcely restrain the joy this gave her; but, unluckily, Dorriforth said soon after to the child, “and now tell me your name.”

“Harry Rusbrook,” replied he with great force and clearness in his voice.

Dorriforth was holding him fondly round the waist as he stood with his feet upon his knees; and at this reply he did not throw him from him—but he removed his hands, which supported him, so suddenly, that the child to prevent falling on the floor, threw himself about his uncle’s neck.—Miss Milner and Miss Woodley turned aside to conceal their tears. “I had liked to have been down,” cried Harry, fearing no other danger.—But his uncle took hold of each hand that had twined around him, and placed him immediately on the ground; and dinner being that instant

stant served, he gave no greater marks of his resentment than calling for his hat, and walking instantly out of the house.

Miss Milner cried for anger ; yet she did not treat with less kindness the object of this vexatious circumstance : she held him in her arms all the while she sat at table, and repeatedly said to him, (though he had not the sense to thank her) “ she would always be his friend.”

The first emotions of resentment against Dorriforth being over, she was easily prevailed upon to return with poor Rusbrook to the farm house, before it was likely his uncle should come back ; another instance of obedience which Miss Woodley was impatient her guardian should know ; she therefore enquired where he was, and sent him a note to acquaint him with it, offering at the same time an apology for what had happened. He returned in the evening seemingly reconciled, nor was a word mentioned of the incident which had occurred during the day ; yet there remained in the austere looks of Dorriforth a perfect remembrance of it, and not one trait of compassion for his hapless nephew.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE are few things so mortifying to a proud spirit as to suffer by immediate comparison—men, can scarcely bear this humiliation, but to women the punishment is intolerable; and Miss Milner now laboured under the disadvantage to a degree, which gave her no small inquietude.

Miss Fenton, a young lady of the most delicate beauty, elegant manners, gentle disposition, and discreet conduct, was introduced to Miss Milner's acquaintance by her guardian; and frequently, sometimes inadvertently, held up by him as a pattern for her to follow—for when he did not say this in direct terms, it was insinuated by the warmth of his panegyrics on those virtues in which Miss Fenton excelled, and his ward was obviously deficient. Conscious of her inferiority in these subjects of her guardian's praise, Miss Milner, instead of being inspired to emulation, was provoked to envy.

Not to admire Miss Fenton was impossible—to find a fault in her person or sentiments

ments was equally impossible—and yet to love her, was very unlikely.

That serenity of mind which kept her features in a continual placid form, though enchanting at the first glance, upon a second, or third, fatigued the sight for a want of variety ; and to have seen her distorted with rage, convulsed with mirth, or in deep dejection, had been to her advantage. But her superior soul appeared above those natural commotions of the mind, and there was more inducement to worship her as a saint, than to love her as a woman.— Yet Dorriforth, whose heart was not formed (at least not educated) for love ; regarding her in the light of friendship, beheld her as the most perfect model of her sex. Lord Frederick on first seeing her was struck with her beauty, and Miss Milner apprehended she had introduced a rival ; but he had not seen her three times, before he called her the most “ insufferable of Heaven’s creatures,” and vowed there was more charming variation in the features of Miss Woodley.

Miss Milner had a heart affectionate to her sex, even where she saw them in the possession of charms superior to her own ;
but

but whether from the spirit of contradiction, whether from feeling herself more than ordinarily offended by her guardian's praise of this lady, or whether there was something in the reserve of Miss Fenton that did not accord with her own frank and ingenuous disposition so as to engage her esteem, it is certain she took infinite satisfaction in hearing her beauty and her virtues depreciated, or turned to ridicule, particularly if Mr. Dorriforth was present. This was very painful to him upon many accounts; perhaps regard to Miss Milner's conduct was not among the least; and whenever the circumstance occurred, he could with difficulty restrain his anger. Miss Fenton was not only a young lady whose amiable qualities Dorriforth admired, but she was soon to be allied to him by her marriage with his nearest relation, Lord Elmwood, a young nobleman whom he sincerely loved.

Lord Elmwood had discovered all that beauty in Miss Fenton which every common observer could not but see—the charms of her mind and her fortune had been pointed out to him by his Tutor; and the utility of their marriage in perfect submission

sion to his precepts, his lordship never permitted himself to question.

This Preceptor held with a magisterial power the government of his pupil's passions; nay, governed them so entirely, no one could perceive (nor did the young lord himself know) that he had any.

This rigid monitor and friend was a Mr. Sandford, bred a jesuit in the same college where Dorriforth was educated, but before his time the order was compelled to take another name.—Sandford had been the tutor of Dorriforth as well as of his cousin Lord Elmwood, and by this double tie seemed now entailed upon the family.—As a jesuit, he was consequently a man of learning; possessed of steadiness to accomplish the end of any design once meditated, and of wisdom to direct the conduct of men more powerful, but less ingenious than himself. The young earl accustomed in his infancy to fear him as his master, in his youth and manhood received every new indulgence with which his preceptor favoured him with gratitude, and became at length to love him as his father—nor had Dorriforth as yet shook off similar sensations.

Mr. Sandford perfectly knew how to
work

work upon the passions of all human nature, but yet had the conscience not to “ draw all hearts towards him.”—There were of mankind, those, whose hate he thought not unworthy his holy labour ; and in that, he was more rapid in his success than even in procuring esteem. In this enterprize he succeeded with Miss Milner, even beyond his most sanguine wish.

She had been educated at an English boarding school, and had no idea of the superior and subordinate state of a foreign seminary—besides, as a woman, she was privileged to say any thing she pleased ; and as a beautiful woman, she had a right to expect whatever she pleased to say, should be admired.

Sandford knew the hearts of women, as well as those of men, notwithstanding he had passed but little of his time in their society—he saw Miss Milner’s heart at the first view of her person ; and beholding in that little circumference a weight of folly he wished to see eradicated, he began to toil in the vineyard, eager to draw upon him her detestation, in the hope he could also make her abominate herself. The mortifications of flight he was expert in, and

and being a man of talents, such as all companies, especially those Miss Milner often frequented, looked on with respect, he did not begin by wasting that reverence so highly valued upon ineffectual remonstrances, of which he could foresee the reception, but awakened the attention of the lady solely by his neglect of her. He spoke of her in her presence as of an indifferent person; sometimes forgot to name her when the subject required it; and then would ask her pardon and say, he “did not recollect her,” with such seeming sorrow for his fault, she could not think the offence intended, and of course felt the affront much more severely.

While, with every other person she was the principal, the first cause upon which a whole company depended for conversation, music, cards, or dancing, with Mr. Sandford she found she was of no importance.—Sometimes she tried to consider this disregard of her as merely the effect of ill-breeding, but he was not an ill-bred man; he was a gentleman by birth, and one who had kept the best company; a man of sense and learning.—‘And does such a man slight me without knowing it?’ she cried—for she had not
dived

dived so deep into the powers of simulation, as to suspect such careless manners were the result of art.

This behaviour of Mr. Sandford's had its desired effect ; it humbled Miss Milner in her own opinion, more than a thousand sermons would have done preached on the vanity of youth and beauty. She felt an inward nothingness she never knew before, and had been cured of all her pride, had she not possessed a degree of spirit beyond the generality of her sex, and such as even Mr. Sandford with all his penetration did not expect.—She determined to resent his treatment, and entering the list as his declared enemy, give reasons to the beholders why he did not, with them, acknowledge her sovereignty.

She now commenced hostilities on all his arguments, his learning, and his favourite axioms ; and by a happy turn for ridicule, in want of other weapons, threw in the way of the holy Father as great trials for his patience, as any his order could have substituted in penance. Some things he bore like a martyr—at others, his fortitude would forsake him, and he would call on her guardian, his late pupil, to interpose
with

with his authority ; on which she would declare she only acted “ to try the good man’s temper,” and had he combated with his fretfulness but a few minutes longer, she would have acknowledged his right to canonization ; but having yielded to the fallies of his anger, he must now go through numerous other probations.”

If Miss Fenton was admired by Dorri-forth, by Sandford she was adored—and instead of giving her as an example to Miss Milner, he spoke of her as of one, endowed beyond Miss Milner’s power of imitation.—Often with a shake of his head and a sigh would he say,

“ No, I am not so hard upon you as your guardian ; I only desire you to love Miss Fenton ; to resemble her, I believe, is above your ability.”

This was something too much—and poor Miss Woodley, who was generally a witness of these controversies, suffered a degree of sorrow at every sentence that distressed Miss Milner.—Yet as she suffered for Mr. Sandford too, the joy of her friend’s reply was abated by the uneasiness it gave to him. But Mrs. Horton felt for none but the right reverend priest ; and often did she feel

feel so violently interested in his cause, she could not refrain giving an answer herself in his behalf—thus, doing the duty of an adversary.

CHAPTER X.

MR. Sandford finding his friend Dorriforth frequently perplexed in the management of his ward, and he himself thinking her incorrigible, gave his advice, that a proper match should be immediately sought out for her, and the care of so dangerous a person given into other hands. Dorriforth acknowledged the propriety of this counsel, but lamented the difficulty there was in pleasing his ward as to the quality of her lover, for she had refused, besides Sir Edward Ashton, many others of equal pretensions. “Depend upon it then,” cried Mr. Sandford, “her affections are already engaged, and it is proper you should know to whom.”—Dorriforth thought he did know, and mentioned Lord Frederick Lawnly; but said he had no farther authority

rity for the supposition, than what his observation had given him, for that every explanation both on his lordship's side, and on that of the lady's, were evaded.—

“Take her then,” cried Sandford, “into the country, and if his lordship does not follow, there is an end to your suspicions.”

—“I shall not easily prevail upon Miss Milner to leave the town,” replied Dorriforth, “while it is in its highest fashion; while all the gay world are resorted hither.”

—“You can but try,” returned Sandford, “and if you should not succeed now; at least fix the time you mean to go during the Autumn, and keep to your determination.”—“But in the Autumn,” replied Dorriforth, “Lord Frederick will of course be in the country, and as his uncle's estate is near to our residence, he will not then so evidently follow Miss Milner, as he would, could I induce her to go now.”

It was agreed the attempt should be made—and instead of receiving the proposal with uneasiness, Miss Milner, to the surprise of every one present, immediately consented; and gave her guardian an opportunity of saying several of the kindest
and

and politest things upon her ready compliance.

“ A token of approbation from you, Mr. Dorriforth,” returned she, “ I always considered with the highest estimation—but your commendations are now become infinitely superior in value, by their scarcity ; for I do not believe that since Miss Fenton and Mr. Sandford came to town, I have received one testimony of your friendship.”

Had these words been uttered with pleasure, they might have passed without observation ; but at the conclusion of the period, resentment flew to Miss Milner’s face, and she darted a piercing look at Mr. Sandford, which more pointedly expressed she was angry with him, than had she spoken volumes in her usual strain of raillery.—Dorriforth looked confused—but the concern which she had so plainly evinced for his good opinion throughout what she had said, silenced any rebuke he might else have been tempted to give her, for this unwarrantable charge against his friend.—Mrs. Horton was shocked at the irregular manner in which Mr. Sandford was treated—while Miss Woodley turned to him with a smile upon her face, hoping to set him an example

example of the manner in which he should receive this reproach.—Her good wishes did not succeed—yet he was perfectly unruffled, and replied with coolness,

“The air of the country has affected the young lady already—but it is a comfortable thing,” continued he, “that in the variety of humours some women are exposed to, they cannot be steadfast even in deceit.”

“Deceit,” cried Miss Milner; “in what am I deceitful? did I ever pretend, Sir, I had an esteem for you?”

“That had not been deceit, madam, but merely good manners.”

“I never, Mr. Sandford, sacrificed truth to politeness.”

“Except when the country has been proposed, and you thought it politeness to appear satisfied.”

“And I was satisfied, till I recollected you might probably be of the party—then every grove was changed to a wilderness, every rivulet into a stagnated pool, and every singing bird into a croaking raven.”

“A very poetical description,” returned he calmly.—“But, Miss Milner, you need not have had any apprehensions of

my company in the country, for I understand the feat to which your guardian means to go, belongs to you ; and depend upon it, madam, I shall never enter a house where you are the mistress."

" Nor any house I am certain, Mr. Sandford, but where you yourself are the master."

" What do you mean, madam ? (and for the first time he elevated his voice,) am I the master here ?"

" Your servants," replied she looking at the company, " will not tell you so, but I do."

" You condescend, Mr. Sandford," cried Mrs. Horton, " in talking so much to a young woman ; but I know you do it for her good."

" Well, Miss Milner," cried Dorriforth, (and the most cutting thing he could say,) " since I find my proposal of the country has put you out of humour, I shall mention it no more."

With all that vast quantity of resentment, anger, or rage which sometimes boiled in the veins of Miss Milner, she was yet never wanting in that respect towards her guardian, which withheld her from uttering
one

one angry sentence, immediately directed to him ; and a severe word on his side, instead of exasperating, was sure to soften her. Such was the case at present—his words seemed to cut her to the heart, but she had not the asperity to reply to them as she thought they merited, and she burst into tears.—Dorriforth, instead of being concerned, as he usually was at seeing her uneasy, appeared on the present occasion provoked.—He thought her weeping was a new reproach to his friend, Mr. Sandford, and to suffer himself to be moved by it, he considered would be a tacit condemnation of his friend's conduct.—She understood his thoughts, and getting the better of her tears, apologized for the weakness of which she had been guilty ; adding,

“ She could never bear with indifference an unjust accusation.”

“ To prove mine was such, madam,” replied Dorriforth, “ be prepared to quit London, without any marks of regret, within a few days.”

She bowed assent ; the necessary preparations were agreed upon ; and while Miss Milner with apparent satisfaction adjusted the plan of her journey, (like those per-

sons who behave well, not so much to please themselves as to vex their enemies,) she secretly triumphed in the mortification she supposed Mr. Sandford would receive, from her obedient behaviour.

The news of this intended journey was soon made public. There is a secret charm in being pitied, when the misfortune is but ideal, and Miss Milner found immense gratification in being told, “her’s was a cruel case,” and that it was “unjust and barbarous to force so much beauty to be concealed in the country, while London was filled with admirers; who, like her, would languish in consequence of the separation.” These things, and a thousand such, a thousand times repeated, she still listened to with pleasure; yet preserved the constancy not to shrink from her resolution of submitting.

Those sighs, which Miss Woodley had long ago observed, became, however, more frequent still; and a tear half starting to her eye was an additional matter of her friends observation. Yet though Miss Milner at those times was softened to melancholy, she by no means appeared unhappy. Miss Woodley was acquainted with the
name

name of love only, yet she concluded from these encreased symptoms, what she before only suspected, that love *must* be their basis. “ Her senses have been captivated by the person and accomplishments of Lord Frederick,” said Miss Woodley to herself, “ while her understanding beholds his faults; and reproaches her passion—and, oh!” cried she, “ could her guardian and Mr. Sandford know of this conflict, how much more would they have to admire than to condemn!”

With these friendly thoughts, joined to the most perfect good intent, Miss Woodley did not fail to give both gentlemen to believe, a contention of this nature was the present state of Miss Milner’s mind.—Dorriforth was affected at the description, and Sandford urged more than ever the necessity of the country expedition.—In a few days time they undertook it; Mrs. Horton, Miss Woodley, Miss Milner, and Mr. Dorriforth, accompanied by Miss Fenton, whom Miss Milner, as she knew it to be the wish of her guardian, invited to pass the three months previous to her marriage, at her country seat. Elmwood House, or rather Castle, the seat of Lord Elmwood,

was only a few miles from this residence, and his lordship was expected to pass great part of the summer there with his tutor, Mr. Sandford.

In the neighbourhood was also an estate belonging to an uncle of Lord Frederick's, and many of the company suspected they should soon see his lordship on a visit there, and to that expectation did they in great measure attribute Miss Milner's visible content.

CHAPTER XI.

WITH this party Miss Milner arrived at her country house, and for near six weeks all around was the perfect picture of tranquillity;—her satisfaction was as evident as every other person's; and every severe reflection being at this time unnecessary, either to teize her to her duty, or to warn her against follies, she was even in perfect good humour with Miss Fenton, and added to the hospitality of a host, the kindness of a friend.

Mr.

Mr. Sandford, who came with Lord Elmwood to the neighbouring seat about a week after the arrival of Miss Milner at her's, was so scrupulously exact in the observance of his word, "*never to enter a house of Miss Milner's,*" that he would not even call upon his friend Dorriforth there—but in their walks, and at Lord Elmwood's, the two parties would occasionally join, and of course Sandford and she at those times met—yet so distant was the reserve on either side, that not a single word was, upon any occasion, ever exchanged between them.

Miss Milner did not like Mr. Sandford; yet, as there was no real cause for inveterate rancour, admiring him too as a man who meant well, and being besides of a most forgiving temper, she frequently felt concerned that he did not speak to her, although it had been to find fault as usual—and one morning as they were all, after a long ramble, drawing towards her house, where Lord Elmwood was invited to dine, she even burst into tears at seeing Sandford turn back and wish them a "good day."

But though she had generosity to forgive an affront, she had not the humility to make a concession; and she foresaw that

nothing less than some very humble atonement on her part, would prevail upon the haughty priest to be reconciled. Dorriforth saw her concern upon this trifling occasion with a secret pleasure, and an admiration she had never before excited. She insinuated to him to be a mediator between them; but before any accommodation could take place, the peace and composure of their abode was disturbed by the arrival of Sir Edward Ashton at Lord Elmwood's, where it appeared as if he had been invited in order to pursue his matrimonial plan.

At a dinner at Lord Elmwood's Sir Edward was announced as an unexpected visitor; Miss Milner did not suppose him such, and turned pale when his name was uttered—Dorriforth fixed his eyes upon her with some tokens of compassion, while Sandford seemed to exult, and by his repeated "Welcome" to the baronet, gave evident proofs how much he was rejoiced to see him. All the declining enmity of Miss Milner was renewed at this behaviour, and suspecting Sandford to be the instigator of his visit, she could not overcome her displeasure, but gave way to it in a manner she thought the most mortifying.—Sir Edward

Edward in the course of conversation, enquired “ what neighbours were in the country ;” and she with the highest appearance of satisfaction, named Lord Frederick Lawnly, as one who was hourly expected at his uncle’s. The colour spread over Sir Edward’s face—Dorriforth looked confounded—and Mr. Sandford as if he could have struck her.

“ Did Lord Frederick tell *you* he should be down ?” Sandford asked of Dorriforth.

To which he replied, “ No.”

“ But I hope, Mr. Sandford, you will permit me to know ?” cried Miss Milner.—For as she now meant to torture him by what she said, she no longer constrained herself to silence—and as he harboured the same kind intent towards her, he had no longer any objection to make a reply, and therefore answered,

“ No, madam, if it depended upon my permission, you should *not* know.”

“ Not *any thing*, Sir, I dare say ;—you would keep me in utter ignorance.”

“ I would.”

“ From a self-interested motive, Mr. Sandford—that I might have a greater respect for you.”

Some of the persons present laughed—Mrs. Horton coughed—Miss Woodley blushed—Lord Elmwood sneered—Dorri-forth frowned—and Miss Fenton looked just as she did before.

The conversation was changed as soon as possible, and early in the evening the company returned home.

Miss Milner had scarce left her dressing room, where she had been taking off part of her dress, when Dorriforth's servant came to acquaint her his master was alone in his study, and begged to speak with her.—She felt herself tremble—she immediately experienced a consciousness she had not acted properly at Lord Elmwood's; for she had a prescience her guardian was going to upbraid her, and her heart told her, he had never yet reproached her without a cause.

Miss Woodley just then entered the apartment, and she even found herself so much a coward, as to propose her going to Dorriforth along with her, and aiding her with a word or two occasionally in her excuse.

“What you, my dear,” returned Miss Woodley, “who not two hours ago, had the
the

the courage to vindicate your own cause before a whole company, of whom many were your adversaries ; do you want an advocate before your guardian only ? and he, who has ever treated you with tenderness."

" It is that tenderness which frightens me, Miss Woodley ; that intimidates, and strikes me dumb—is it possible I can return impertinence to the language and manners Mr. Dorriforth uses ? and as I am debarred from that, what can I do but stand before him like a guilty creature, acknowledging my faults."

She again entreated Miss Woodley to go with her, but on a positive refusal, from the impropriety of such an intrusion, she was at length obliged to go by herself.

How much do different circumstances influence not only the manners, but even the persons of some people !—Miss Milner in the drawing room at Lord Elmwood's surrounded by listeners, by admirers, (for even her enemies beheld her with admiration,) and warm with their approbation and applause—and Miss Milner, with no giddy observer to give a false eclat to her actions, left destitute of all but her own understanding,

ing, (which secretly condemns her,) and upon the point of receiving the censure of her guardian and friend, are two different beings.—Though still beautiful beyond description, she does not look even in person the same.—In the last mentioned situation, she was shorter in stature than in the former—she was paler—she was thinner—and a very different contour presided over her whole air, and all her features.

When she arrived at the study door, she opened it with a trepidation she could hardly account for, and entered to Dorriforth the altered woman she has been represented. His heart had taken the most decided part against her, and his face assumed the most severe aspect of reproach; when her appearance gave an instantaneous change to *his* whole mind, and countenance.

She halted, as if she feared to approach—he hesitated, as if he knew not how to speak.—Instead of the warmth with which he was prepared to begin, his voice involuntarily softened, and without knowing what he said, he began,

“ My dear Miss Milner”—

She expected he was angry, and in her confusion his gentleness was lost upon her
—she

—she imagined what he said might be severe, and she continued to tremble, although he repeatedly assured her, he meant only to advise, not to upbraid her.

“ For in respect to all those little disputes between Mr. Sandford and you,” said he, “ I should be partial if I blamed you more than him—indeed, when you take the liberty to censure him, his character makes the freedom appear in a more serious light than when he complains of you—yet, if he provokes your retorts, he alone must answer for them ; nor will I undertake to decide betwixt you.—But I have a question to ask you, and to which I require a serious and unequivocal answer.—Do you expect Lord Frederick in the country ?”

Without hesitation she replied, “ she did.”

“ I have one more question to ask, madam, and to which I expect a reply equally unreserved.—Is Lord Frederick the man you approve for a husband ?”

Upon this close interrogation she discovered an embarrassment, and a confusion beyond any she had ever before given proofs of ; and in this situation she faintly replied,

“ No, he is not.”

“ Your

“Your words tell me one thing,” answered Dorriforth, “while your looks declare another—which am I to trust?”

“Which you please,” she returned with an insulted dignity, that astonished, awed, yet did not convince him.

“But then why encourage him to follow you hither, Miss Milner?”

“Why commit a thousand follies (she replied in tears) every hour of my life?”

“You then promote the hopes of Lord Frederick without one serious intention of completing them? This is a conduct which it is my duty to guard you against, and you shall no longer deceive either him or yourself. The moment he arrives it is my fixed resolution you refuse to see him, or agree to become his wife.”

In answer to this, she appeared averse both to the one proposition and the other, yet came to no explanation why; but left her guardian at the conclusion of the conversation as much at a loss to decide upon her real sentiments, as he was before he had thus seriously requested to be informed of them; but having stedfastly taken the resolution which he had declared to her, he found

found that determination a certain relief to his mind.

CHAPTER XII.

SIR Edward Ashton, though not invited by Miss Milner, yet frequently did himself the favour to come to her house; sometimes he accompanied Lord Elmwood on a visit to her, at other times he came to see Dorrisforth only, who generally introduced him to the ladies. But Sir Edward was either so unwilling to give pain to the object of his love, or so much intimidated by her frowns, that he seldom addressed a single word to her, except the common compliments of entering, and retiring.— This apprehension of offending, without one hope of pleasing, had the most awkward effect upon the manners of the worthy baronet, and his endeavours to insinuate himself into the affections of the woman he loved, merely by the means of not giving her offence either by speaking or looking at her, was a circumstance so whimsical, that it frequently forced a smile from Miss Milner,

Milner, though the very name of Sir Edward was of power to throw a gloom over her face; for she looked upon him as the cause why she should be hurried to make an election of a lover, before her own mind could well direct her where to fix.—Besides, his pursuit was a trouble, while it was not the smallest triumph to her vanity, which, by the addresses of Lord Frederick, was in the highest manner gratified.

His lordship now arrives in the country, and calls at Miss Milner's; her guardian sees his chariot coming along the lawn, and gives orders to the servants to say their lady is not at home, but that Mr. Dorriforth is; Lord Frederick leaves his compliments and goes away.

The ladies all saw his carriage and servants at the door; Miss Milner flew to the glass to adjust her dress, and in her looks expressed signs of palpitation—but in vain she keeps her eyes fixed upon the door of the apartment; he does not enter.

After some minutes expectation, the door opens and her guardian comes in; she was disappointed, he perceived she was, and he looked at her with a very serious face; she immediately called to mind the assurance
he

he had given her, "that her acquaintance with Lord Frederick in its present state should not continue," and between chagrin and confusion, she was at a loss how to behave.

Notwithstanding the ladies were all present, Dorriforth said to her, without the smallest reserve, "Perhaps, Miss Milner, you may think I have taken an unwarrantable liberty in giving orders to your servants to deny you to Lord Frederick, but until his lordship and I have had a private conference, or you condescend to declare your sentiments more fully in regard to his visits, I think it my duty to put an end to them."

"You will always perform your duty, Mr. Dorriforth, I have no doubt, whether I concur or not."

"Yet believe me, madam, I should do it much more cheerfully, could I hope it was sanctioned by your inclinations."

"I am not mistress of my inclinations, Sir, or they should conform to yours."

"Place them under my direction, madam, and I'll answer they will."

A servant entered.—"Lord Frederick is returned, Sir, and says he should be glad

to see you.”—“ Shew him into the study,” cried Dorriforth hastily, and rising from his seat, left the room.

“ I hope they won’t quarrel,” said Mrs. Horton, meaning, she thought they would.

“ I am sorry to see you so uneasy, Miss Milner,” said Miss Fenton, with the most perfect unconcern.

As the badness of the weather had prevented their usual morning’s exercise, the ladies sat employed at their needles till the dinner bell called them away.—“ Do you think Lord Frederick is gone?” then, whispered Miss Milner to Miss Woodley.—“ I think not,” returned Miss Woodley.—“ Go ask of the servants, dear creature.” And Miss Woodley went out of the room.—She soon returned and said, apart, “ He is now getting into his chariot, I saw him pass hastily through the hall; he seemed to fly.”

“ Ladies, the dinner is waiting,” cried Mrs. Horton, and they repaired to the dining room; where Dorriforth soon after came, and engrossed their whole attention by his disturbed looks, and unusual silence. Before dinner was over he was, however, more himself, but still he appeared thoughtful and dissatisfied. At the time of their
evening

evening walks he excused himself, and was seen in a distant field with Mr. Sandford in earnest conversation ; for they frequently stopt on one spot for a quarter of an hour, as if the interest of the subject had so totally engaged them, they stood still without knowing it. Lord Elmwood, who had joined the ladies, walked home with them ; Dorriforth entered soon after, in a much less gloomy humour than when he went out, and told his lordship he and the ladies would dine with him to-morrow if he was disengaged, and it was fixed they should.

Still Dorriforth was in some perturbation, but the immediate cause was concealed till the next day, when, about an hour before the company's departure from the Castle, Miss Milner and Miss Woodley were desired, by a servant, to walk into a separate apartment, where they found Dorriforth with Mr. Sandford waiting their coming. Her guardian made an apology to Miss Milner for the form, the ceremony, of which he was going to make use ; but he trusted the extreme weight with which his mind was oppressed, lest he should mistake the real sentiments of a lady whose happiness depended upon his being correct

rect in the knowledge of them, he trusted, that would plead his excuse.

“ I know, Miss Milner,” continued he, “ the world, in general, allows to unmarried women great latitude in disguising their mind with respect to the man they love.—I too, am willing to pardon any little dissimulation that is but consistent with that modesty, becoming every woman on the subject of marriage. But to what point I may limit, or you may think proper to extend this kind of venial deceit, may so widely differ, that it is not impossible I remain wholly unacquainted with your sentiments, even after you have revealed them to me.—Under this consideration, I wish once more to hear your thoughts in regard to matrimony, and to hear them before one of your own sex, that I may be enabled to form my opinion by her constructions.”

To all this serious oration, Miss Milner made no other reply than by turning to Mr. Sandford, and asking, “ If he was the person of her own sex, to whose judgment her guardian meant to submit his own?”

“ Madam,

“Madam,” cried Sandford very angrily, “you are come hither upon serious business.”

“Any business must be serious to me, Mr. Sandford, in which you are concerned; and if you had called it *sorrowful*, the epithet would have suited as well.”

“Miss Milner,” said her guardian, “I did not bring you here to contend with Mr. Sandford.”

“Then why, Sir, bring him hither? for where he and I are, there must be contention.”

“I brought him hither, madam, or rather brought you to this house, merely that he might be present on this occasion, and with his discernment relieve me from a suspicion, that my own judgment can neither suppress or confirm.”

“Is there any more company you may wish to call in, Sir, to clear up your doubts of my veracity? If so, pray send for them before you begin your interrogations.”

He shook his head——she continued. “The whole world is welcome to hear what I say, and every different judge welcome, if they please, to judge me differently.”

“Dear

“ Dear Miss Milner—,” cried Miss Woodley, with a tone of reproach for the vehemence with which she spoke.

“ Perhaps, Miss Milner,” said Dorriforth, “ you will not now reply to those questions I was going to put to you?”

“ Did I ever refuse, Sir,” returned she with a self-approving air, “ to comply with any request you have seriously made me? Have I ever refused to obey your commands whenever you thought proper to lay them upon me? If not, you have no right to suppose I will now.”

He was going to reply, when Mr. Sandford suddenly interrupted him, and making towards the door, cried, “ When you come to the point for which you brought me here, send for me again.”

“ Stay now,” cried Dorriforth. “ And Miss Milner,” continued he, “ I not only entreat, but command you to tell me.—Have you given your promises, your word, or your affections to Lord Frederick Lawnley?”

The colour spread over her face, and she replied—“ I thought confessions were only permitted in secrecy; however, as I am not a member of your church, I submit

mit to the persecution of a heretic, and answer—Lord Frederick has neither my word, my promise, nor any share in my affections.”

Sandford, Dorriforth, and Miss Woodley all looked at each other with a surprise that was for some time dumb.—At length Dorriforth said, “ And it is your firm intention never to become his wife?”

To which she answered—“ At present it is.”

“ At present! do you suspect you shall change your sentiments?”

“ Women sometimes do.”

“ But before that change can take place, madam, your acquaintance will be broken off: for it is that, I shall next insist upon; and to which you can have no objection.”

She replied, “ I had rather it would continue.”

“ On what account?” cried Dorriforth.

“ Because it entertains me.”

“ For shame, for shame!” returned he, “ it endangers both your character and your happiness.—Yet again, do not suffer me to break with his lordship if you should
like

like to become his wife ; if in that respect it militates against your felicity ?”

“ By no means,” she answered ; “ Lord Frederick makes part of my amusement, but could never constitute my felicity.”

Miss Woodley,” said Dorriforth, “ do you comprehend your friend in the same literal unequivocal sense I do ”?

“ Certainly I do, Sir,” answered Miss Woodley.

“ And pray, Miss Woodley,” said he, “ were those the sentiments which you have always entertained.”

Miss Woodley hesitated—he continued. “ Or has the present conversation altered them ?”

She hesitated again, then answered— “ The present conversation has altered them.”

“ And yet you confide in it !” Cried Sandford, looking at her with contempt.

“ Certainly I do, replied Miss Woodley:

“ Do not you then, Mr. Sandford ?” asked Dorriforth.

“ I would advise you to act the same as if I did.” Replied Sandford.

“ Then, Miss Milner,” said Dorriforth, “ you see Lord Frederick no more—and
I hope

I hope I have your permission to tell him so?"

"You have, Sir," she replied with a completely unembarrassed countenance and voice.

Miss Woodley looked hard at her, to discover some lurking wish adverse to all these protestations, but she could not discern one.—Sandford too fixed his penetrating eyes as if he would look through her soul, but finding it perfectly composed, he cried out,

"Why then not write his lordship's dismissal herself, and save you, Mr. Dorriorth, the trouble of any farther contest with him?"

"Indeed, Miss Milner," said Dorriorth, "that would oblige me; for it is with the greatest reluctance I meet his lordship upon this subject—he was extremely impatient and importunate the last time he was with me—he took advantage of my ecclesiastic situation to treat me with a levity, and ill-breeding, I could ill have suffered upon any other consideration, than the complying with my duty to you."

"Dictate what you please, Mr. Dorriorth, and I will write it," said she with a

warmth like the most unaffected inclination. —“ And while you, Sir,” she continued, “ are so indulgent as not to distress me with the importunities of any gentleman to whom I am averse, I think myself equally bound to rid you of the impertinence of every one, to whom you may have objection.”

“ But,” answered he, “ be assured I have no material objection to my Lord Frederick, except from that dilemma, into which your acquaintance with him has involved us all ; and the same I should conceive against any other man, where the same circumstance occurred.—As you have now, however, freely and politely consented to the manner in which it has been proposed, you shall break with him, I will not trouble you a moment longer upon a subject on which I have so frequently explained my wishes, but conclude it by assuring you, your ready acquiescence has given me the sincerest satisfaction.”

“ I hope, Mr. Sandford,” said she, turning to him with a smile, “ I have given you satisfaction likewise.”

Sandford could not say yes, and was ashamed to say no ; he, therefore, made no
answer

answer except by his looks, which were full of suspicion. She, notwithstanding, made him a very low courtesy.—Her guardian then handed her out of the apartment into her coach, which was waiting to take her, Miss Woodley, and himself home.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOTWITHSTANDING the seeming readiness with which Miss Milner had resigned all farther acquaintance with Lord Frederick, during the short ride home she appeared to have lost great part of her wonted spirits; she was thoughtful, and once sighed most heavily. Dorrisforth began to fear she had not only made a sacrifice of her affections, but of her veracity; yet, why she had done so, he could not comprehend.

As the carriage moved slowly thro' a lane between Elmwood Castle and her house, on casting her eyes out of the window, Miss Milner's countenance was brightened in an instant, and that instant Lord

Frederick on horse-back was at the coach door, and the coachman stooped.

“ Oh, Miss Milner,” cried he, (with a voice and manner that could give little suspicion of the truth of what he said) “ I am overjoyed at the happiness of seeing you, even though it is but an accidental meeting.”

She was evidently glad to see him, but the earnestness with which he spoke, put her upon her guard not to express the like ; and she said in a cool constrained manner, she, “ was glad to see his lordship.”

The reserve with which she spoke, gave Lord Frederick immediate suspicion who was in the coach with her, and turning his head quickly, he met the stern eye of Dorriforth ; upon which, without the smallest salutation he turned from him again abruptly and rudely. Miss Milner was confused, and Miss Woodley in torture at the palpable affront ; to which Dorriforth alone appeared indifferent.

“ Go on,” said Miss Milner to the footman, “ desire the coachman to drive on.”

“ No,” cried Lord Frederick, “ not till you have told me when I shall see you again.”

“ I will

“ I will write you word, my Lord,” replied she, something alarmed ; “ you shall have a letter immediately after I get home.”

As if he guessed what its contents were to be, he cried out with warmth, “ Take care then, madam, how you treat me in that letter—and you, Mr. Dorriforth,” turning to him, “ do you take care what it contains, for if it is dictated by you, to you I shall send the answer.”

Dorriforth, without making his lordship a reply, or casting a look at him, put his head out of the window on the opposite side, and called, in a very angry tone to the coachman, “ How dare you not drive on, when your lady orders you ?”

The sound of Dorriforth’s voice in anger was to the servants so unusual, it acted like a stroke of electricity on the man, and he drove on at the instant so swiftly, that Lord Frederick was in a moment left many yards behind. As soon, however, as he recovered from the surprise into which this sudden command had thrown him, he rode with speed after the carriage, and followed it till they all arrived at the door of Miss Milner’s house ; there his lordship,

giving himself up to the rage of love, or to rage against Dorriforth for the contempt with which he had treated him, leapt from his horse as Miss Milner stepped from her carriage, and seizing her hand, entreated her “Not to desert him, in compliance to the monastic precepts of hypocrisy.”

Dorriforth heard this, standing silently by, with a manly scorn painted on his countenance.

Miss Milner struggled to loose her hand, saying, “Excuse me from replying to you now, my Lord.”

In return to which his lordship brought her hand to his lips, and began to devour it with kisses, when Dorriforth, with an instantaneous impulse, rushed forward, and struck him a blow in the face.—Under the force with which this assault was given, and the astonishment it excited, his lordship staggered, and letting fall the hand of Miss Milner, her guardian immediately laid hold of it, and led her into the house.

She was terrified beyond description; and it was with difficulty Mr. Dorriforth could get her to her own chamber, without taking her in his arms.—When, with the assistance of her woman, he had placed her

her upon a sofa—all shame and confusion for what he had done, he dropped upon his knees before her, and earnestly, “ entreated her forgiveness for the indelicacy he had been guilty of in her presence.”— And that he had alarmed her, and lost sight of the respect which he thought sacredly her due, seemed to be the only circumstance that dwelt upon his thoughts.

She felt the indecorum of the posture he had condescended to take, and was shocked—to see her guardian at her feet, struck with the same impropriety as if she had beheld a parent there; and, all agitation and emotion, she implored him to rise, and with a thousand protestations declared, “ she thought the rashness of the act, was the highest proof of his regard for her.”

Miss Woodley now entered; for her care being ever employed upon the unfortunate, Lord Frederick on this occasion, had been the object of it; and she had waited by his side, and with every good purpose, preached patience to him, while he was smarting under the pain and shame of his chastisement.—At first, his fury threatened to retort upon the servants around him, and who refused his entrance into the house,

the punishment he had received—But in the certainty of an honourable amends which must hereafter be made, he overcame the many temptations which the moment offered, and remounting his horse, rode from the place.

No sooner had Miss Woodley entered the room, and Dorriforth had resigned to her the care of his ward, than he flew to the spot where he had left his lordship, negligent what might have been the event had he still remained there.—After enquiring, and being told he was gone, Dorriforth returned to his own apartment, and with a bosom torn by more excruciating sensations far, than those he had given to his adversary.

The remorse that first struck him as he shut the door upon himself was—I have departed from my character—from the sacred character and dignity of my profession and sentiments—I have departed from myself.—I am no longer the philosopher, but the ruffian—I have treated with an unpardonable insult a young nobleman, whose only crime was love, and a fond desire to insinuate himself into the favour of his mistress.—I must atone for this outrage in
whatever

whatever manner he may choose, and the law of justice and equity (though in this one instance contrary to the law of religion) enjoins, that if he demands my life, in satisfaction for his wounded honour, it is his due. “Alas,” cried he, “that I could have laid it down this morning, unfulfilled with the cause, for which it will make but poor atonement.”

He next reflected—I have offended, and filled with horror a beautiful young lady, whom it was my duty to have protected from the brutal manners, to which I myself have exposed her.

Again—I have drawn upon me the just reproaches of my faithful preceptor and friend; the man in whose judgment it was my delight to be approved—above all, I have drawn upon myself the stings of my own conscience.

“Where shall I pass this sleepless night?” cried he, walking repeatedly across his chamber; “Can I go to the ladies? I am a brute, unworthy such society.—Shall I go and repose my disturbed mind on Sandford? I am ashamed to tell him the cause of my uneasiness.—Shall I go to Lord Frederick, and, humbling myself before him,

beg his forgiveness? He would spurn me for a coward.—No”——(and he lifted up his eyes to Heaven) “Thou all great, all wise, and all omnipotent being, whom I have above any other offended, to thee alone I apply in this hour of tribulation, and from thee alone I expect comfort.—And the confidence with which I now address myself to thee, encouraged by that long intercourse religion has effected, in this one moment pays me amply, for the many years of my past life wholly devoted to thy service.”

CHAPTER XIV.

ALTHOUGH Miss Milner had foreseen no fatal event from the indignity offered Lord Frederick, yet she passed a night very different from those to which she had been accustomed. No sooner was she falling into a sleep, than a thousand vague but distressing ideas darted across her imagination.—Her heart would at times whisper to her as she was half asleep, “Lord Frederick

Frederick is banished from you for ever.”

—She shakes off the uneasiness this idea brings along with it—she then starts, and beholds the blow still aimed at him by Dorriforth.—And no sooner has she driven away this painful image, than she is again awakened by seeing her guardian at her feet suing for pardon.—She sighs, she trembles, she is chilled with terror.

Relieved by a flood of tears ; towards the morning she sinks into a refreshing slumber, but waking, finds the self-same images crowding all together upon her mind—she is doubtful to which to give the preference—one, however, rushes the foremost, and will continue so—she knows not the consequence of ruminating, nor why she dwells upon that more than upon all the rest, and yet it will give place to none.

She rises in a languid and disordered state, and at breakfast adds fresh pain to Dorriforth by her altered appearance.

He had scarce left the breakfast room when an officer waited upon him charged with a challenge from Lord Frederick. To the message delivered to him by this gentleman, Dorriforth replied,

“ As

“As a clergyman, more especially in the church of Rome, I know not whether I am not exempt from answering a claim of this kind; but not having had forbearance to avoid an offence, I have no right to a privilege that would only indemnify me from making reparation.”

“You will then meet his lordship, Sir, at the appointed time?” said the officer.

“I will,” answered Dorriforth, “and my immediate care shall be to procure a gentleman to accompany me.”

The officer withdrew, and as soon as Dorriforth was once more alone, he was going once more to reflect, but he durst not—since yesterday, reflection, for the first time of his life, was become painful to him; and even as he rode the short way to Lord Elmwood’s immediately after, he found his own thoughts so insufferable, he was obliged to enter into conversation with his servant. Solitude, that he was formerly so charmed withal, at those moments had been worse than death.

At Lord Elmwood’s, he met Sandford in the hall, and the sight of him was no longer welcome, but displeasing—he knew how different the principles he had just adopted

adopted were to those of that reverend friend's, and without his complaining, or even suspecting what had happened, his presence was a sufficient reproach.—Dorriforth passed him as hastily as he could, and enquiring for Lord Elmwood, disclosed to him his errand, which was to ask him to be his second ; his lordship started, and wished to consult his tutor, but that his kinsman strictly forbid ; and having urged his reasons with arguments, such as his lordship could not refute, he at length prevailed upon him to promise he would accompany him to the field, which was at a few miles distance only, and the parties were to be thereat seven on the same evening.

As soon as his business with Lord Elmwood was settled, Dorriforth returned home, to make some necessary preparations for the event which might ensue from this meeting—he wrote letters to several of his friends ; and one to his ward, over which he shed tears.

Sandford going into Lord Elmwood's library soon after Dorriforth had left it, expressed his surprise at finding him gone ; upon which that young nobleman, after answering a few questions, and giving a
few

few significant tokens, that he was entrusted with a secret, frankly confessed, what he had promised to conceal.

Sandford, as much as a holy man could be, was enraged at Dorriforth for the cause of this challenge, but was still more enraged at him for his wickedness in accepting it—he applauded his pupil's virtue in making the discovery, and congratulated himself that he should be the instrument of saving not only the blood of his friend, but of preventing the scandal of his being engaged in a duel.

In the ardour of his designs he went immediately to Miss Milner's—entered the house he had so long refused to enter, and at a time when he was on aggravated bad terms with its owner.

He asked for Dorriforth, went hastily into his apartment, and poured upon him a torrent of rebukes.—Dorriforth bore all he said with the patience of a devotee, but with the firmness of a man.—He owned his fault, but no eloquence could make him recall the promise he had given to repair the injury.—Unshaken by the arguments, persuasions, and menaces of Sandford, he gave a fresh proof of that inflexibility for which

which he has been described—and after two hours dispute they parted, neither of them the better for what either had advanced, but Dorriforth something the worse; his conscience gave testimony to Sandford's opinion, “that he was bound by ties more sacred than worldly honour,” but while he owned, he would not yield to the duty.

Sandford left him, determined, however, that Lord Elmwood should not be accessory in his guilt, and this he declared; on which Dorriforth took the resolution of seeking another second.

In passing through the house on his return home, Sandford met, by accident, Mrs. Horton, Miss Milner, and the other two ladies returning from a saunter in the garden.—Surprised at the sight of Mr. Sandford in her house, Miss Milner would not express that surprise, but going up to him with all the friendly benevolence which generally played about her heart, she took hold of one of his hands, and pressed it with a kindness which told him he was welcome more forcibly, than if she had made the most elaborate speech to convince him of it.—He, however, seemed little touched
with

with her behaviour, and as an excuse for breaking his word, cried,

“ I beg your pardon, madam, but I was brought hither in my anxiety to prevent murder.”

“ Murder!” exclaimed all the ladies.

“ Yes,” answered he, addressing himself to Miss Fenton, “ your betrothed husband is a party concerned; he is going to second Mr. Dorriforth, who means this very evening to be killed by my Lord Frederick, or to kill him, in addition to the blow he gave him last night.”

Mrs. Horton exclaimed, “ If Mr. Dorriforth dies, he dies a martyr.”

Miss Woodley cried with fervour, “ Heaven forbid!”

Miss Fenton cried, “ Dear me!”

While Miss Milner, without uttering one word, sunk speechless on the floor.

They lifted her up and brought her to the door which entered the garden. She soon recovered; for the tumult of her mind would not suffer her to remain inactive, and she was roused, in spite of her weakness, to endeavour to ward off the present disaster. In vain, however, she tried to walk to Dorriforth’s apartment—
in

in the trial she sunk as before, and was taken to a settee, while Miss Woodley was dispatched to bring her guardian to her.

Informed of the cause of her swoonings, he followed Miss Woodley with a tender anxiety for her health, and with grief and confusion that he had so carelessly endangered it.—On his entering the room Sandford beheld the inquietude of his mind, and cried, “Here is your *guardian*,” with a cruel emphasis on the word.

He was too much engaged by the indisposition of his ward to reply to Sandford.—He placed himself on the settee by her, and with the utmost tenderness, reverence, and pity, entreated her not to be concerned at an accident in which he, and he only, had been to blame; but which he had still no doubt would be accommodated in the most amicable manner.

“I have one favour to require of you, Mr. Dorriforth,” said she, “and that is your promise, your solemn promise, which I know is sacred, that you will not fight with my Lord Frederick.”

He hesitated.

“Oh, madam,” cried Sandford, “he
is

is grown a libertine now, and I would not believe his word were he to give it you."

"Then, Sir," returned Dorriforth angrily, "you *may* believe my word, for I will keep that, I have passed to you.—I will give Lord Frederick all the restitution in my power.—But, my dear Miss Milner, let not this alarm you; we may not find it convenient to meet this many a day; and most probably some fortunate explanation may yet take place, and prevent our meeting at all. If not, reckon but among the many duels that are fought, how few are fatal; and even in that case, how small would be the loss to society"—He was proceeding.

"I should ever deplore the loss," cried Miss Milner, "I could not survive the death of either, in such a case."

"For my part," returned Dorriforth, "I look upon my life as much forfeited to his lordship, to whom I have given a high offence, as it might in other instances have been forfeited to the offended laws of the land. Honour is the law of the polite part of the land; we know it; and when we transgress against it knowingly, we justly incur our punishment.—However, Miss

Milner,

Milner, this business is not to be settled immediately, and I have no doubt but all will be as you could wish.—Do you think I should appear thus easy,” added he with a smile, “ if I were going to be shot at by my Lord Frederick ?

“ Very well,” cried Sandford, with a look that demonstrated he knew better.

“ You will stay within then, all this day ?” said Miss Milner.

“ I am engaged out to dinner,” he replied, “ it is unlucky—I am sorry for it—but I’ll be at home early in the evening.”

“ Stained with human blood,” cried Sandford, “ or yourself a corpse.”

The ladies all lifted up their hands, and Miss Milner rose from her seat and threw herself at her guardian’s feet.

“ You knelt to me last night, I now kneel to you,” she cried ; “ kneel, never desiring to rise more, if you persist in your intention.—I am weak, I am volatile, I am indiscreet, but I have a heart from whence some impressions can never be erased.”

He endeavoured to raise her, she persisted to kneel—and here the trouble, the affright, the terror she endured, discovered to her for the first time her own sentiments
—which,

—which, till that moment, she had doubted—and she continued,

“ I no longer pretend to conceal my passion—I love Lord Frederick Lawnly.”

Her guardian started.

“ Yes, to my shame I love him :”
(cried she, all emotion) “ I meant to have struggled with the weakness, because I supposed it would be displeasing to you—but apprehension for his safety takes away every power of restraint, and I beseech you to spare his life.”

“ This is exactly what I thought.”
cried Sandford, triumphantly.

“ Good heaven!” cried Miss Woodley.

“ But it is very natural,” said Mrs. Horton.

“ I own,” said Dorriforth, (struck with amaze, and now taking her from his feet with a force she could not resist) “ I own, Miss Milner, I am greatly affected at this contradiction in your character”——

“ But did not I say so?” cried Sandford, interrupting him.

“ However,” continued he, “ you may take my word, though you have deceived me in yours, that Lord Frederick’s life is
secure.

secure.—For your sake, I would not endanger it for the universe.—But let this be a warning to you”———

He was proceeding with the most poignant language, and austere looks, when observing the shame, the terror, and the self-reproach which agitated her mind, he divested himself in great measure of his austerity, and said, mildly,

“ Let this be a warning to you, how you deal in future with friends who wish you well—you have hurried me into a mistake that might have cost me my life, or the life of the man you love ; and thus exposed *you* to misery, more bitter than death.”

“ I am not worthy your friendship, Mr. Dorriforth,” said she, sobbing with grief, “ and from this moment forsake me.”

“ No, madam, not in the moment you first discover to me, how I can make you happy.”

The conversation appearing now to become of that nature in which the rest of the company could have no share whatever ; they all, except Mr. Sandford, were retiring ; when Miss Milner called Miss Woodley back, saying, “ Stay you with
me ;

me ; I was never so unfit to be left without your friendship."

" Perhaps for the present you can much easier dispense with mine ?" said Dorriforth. She made no answer : he therefore having once more assured her Lord Frederick's life was safe, was quitting the room ; when he recollected in what a state of humiliation he had left her, and turning towards her as he opened the door, added,

" And be assured, madam, my esteem for you shall be the same as ever."

Sandford, as he followed Dorriforth, bowed to Miss Milner too, and repeated the self-same words—" And, madam, be assured my esteem for you, shall be *the same as ever.*"

CHAPTER XV.

THIS taunting reproof from Sandford made little impression upon Miss Milner, whose thoughts were all fixed on a subject of much more importance than the opinion he entertained of her.—She threw her arms

arms about Miss Woodley as soon as they were left alone, and asked, with anxiety, "What she thought of her behaviour?" Miss Woodley, who could not approve of the duplicity her friend had betrayed, still wished to reconcile her as much as possible to her own conduct, and replied, she "highly commended the frankness with which she had, at last, acknowledged her sentiments."

"Frankness!" cried Miss Milner, starting. "Frankness, my dear Miss Woodley!—what you have just now heard me say, is all a falsehood."

"How, Miss Milner!"

"Oh, my dear Miss Woodley," returned she, sobbing upon her bosom, "pity the agonies of my heart, by nature sincere, when such are the fatal propensities it cherishes; I must submit to the grossest falsehoods rather than reveal the truth."

"What do you mean?" cried Miss Woodley, with the strongest amazement painted on her face.

"Do you suppose I love lord Frederick?" returned the other. "Do you suppose I *can* love him?—Oh fly, Miss Woodley,
and

and prevent my guardian from telling him such an untruth."

"What do you mean?" repeated Miss Woodley; "I protest you frighten me:"—and this inconsistency in the behaviour of Miss Milner really appeared as if her senses had been deranged.

"Only fly," resumed she, "and prevent the inevitable ill consequence which must ensue from Lord Frederick's being told this falsehood. It will involve us all in greater disquietude than we suffer at present."

"Then what has influenced you, my dear Miss Milner?"——

"That which impels my every action," returned she; "an unsurmountable instinct—a fatality, that will ever render me the most miserable of human beings; and yet you, even you, my dear Miss Woodley, will not pity me."

Miss Woodley pressed her close in her arms, and vowed, "That while she was unhappy, from whatever cause, she still would pity her."

"Go to Mr. Dorriforth then, and prevent him from imposing upon Lord Frederick."

"But

“ But that imposition is the only means to prevent the duel,” replied Miss Woodley. “ The moment I have told him you have no regard for his lordship, he will no longer refuse to fight with him.”

“ Then at all events I am undone,” exclaimed Miss Milner, “ for the duel is horrible, even beyond every thing else.”

“ How so ?” returned Miss Woodley, “ since you have declared you do not care for Lord Frederick.”

“ But are you so blind,” returned Miss Milner, with a degree of madness in her looks, “ to believe I do not care for Mr. Dorriforth ? Oh, Miss Woodley ! I love him with all the passion of a mistress, and with all the tenderness of a wife.”

Miss Woodley at this sentence sat down—it was on a chair that was close to her—her feet could not have taken her to any other.—She trembled—she was white as ashes, and deprived of speech. Miss Milner, taking her by the hand, said,

“ I know what you feel—I know what you think of me—and how much you hate and despise me.—But Heaven is witness to all my struggles—nor would I, even to myself, acknowledge the shameless prepossession,

sion, till forced by a sense of his danger"——

"Silence," cried Miss Woodley, struck with horror.

"And even now," resumed Miss Milner, "have I not concealed it from all but you, by plunging myself into a new difficulty, from whence I know not how I shall be extricated?—And do I entertain a hope? No, Miss Woodley, nor ever will.—But suffer me to own my folly to you—to entreat your soothing friendship to free me from my weakness.—And, oh! give me your friendly advice to deliver me from the difficulties which surround me."

Miss Woodley was still pale, and still silent.

Education is called second nature; in the strict (but not enlarged) education of Miss Woodley, it was more powerful than the first—and the violation of oaths, persons, or things consecrated to Heaven, was, in her opinion, if not in the most enormous, the most horrid among the catalogue of crimes.

Miss Milner had lived too long in a family who had imbibed those opinions not to be convinced of their existence; nay, her

her own reason told her that solemn vows of whatever kind, ought to be binding; and the more she respected her guardian's understanding, the less she called in question his religious tenets—in esteeming him, she esteemed all his notions; and among the rest, even venerated those of his religion.—Yet that passion, which had unhappily taken possession of her whole soul, would not have been inspired, had there not subsisted an early difference, in their systems of divine faith—had she been early taught what were the sacred functions of a Roman ecclesiastic, though all her esteem, all her admiration, had been attracted by the qualities and accomplishments of her guardian; yet education would have given such a prohibition to her love, that she had been precluded from it, as by that barrier which divides a sister from a brother.

This, unfortunately, was not the case; and Miss Milner loved Dorriforth without one conscious check to tell her she was wrong, except that which convinced her, her love would be avoided by him, with detestation, with horror.

Miss Woodley, something recovered from her first surprise, and suffering—for

never did her susceptible mind suffer so exquisitely—amidst all the grief and abhorrence she felt, pity was still predominant—and reconciled to the faults of Miss Milner by her misery, she once more looked at her with friendship, and asked, “ what she could do, to render her less unhappy ? ”

“ Make me forget,” replied Miss Milner, “ every moment of my past life since I first saw you—that moment was teeming with a weight of cares I must labour under till my death.”

“ And even in death,” replied Miss Woodley, “ do not be so presumptuous as to hope to shake them off—if unrepented in this world”——

She was proceeding—but the anxiety her friend endured, would not suffer her to be wholly free from the apprehension, that notwithstanding the positive assurance of her guardian, (should he and Lord Frederick meet) the duel might still take place; she therefore rung the bell and enquired if Mr. Dorrisforth was still at home?—the answer was—“ He is rode out.”—“ You remember,” said Miss Woodley, “ he told you he should dine out.”—This did not, however, dismiss her fears, and she dispatched

two servants different ways in pursuit of him, acquainting them with her suspicions, and charging them to prevent his and Lord Frederick's meeting. Sandford had also taken his precautions ; but though he knew the time, he did not know the exact place of their appointment, for that, Lord Elmwood had forgot to enquire.

The excessive alarm which Miss Milner discovered upon this occasion, was imputed by the servants, and others who were witnesses of it, to her affection for Lord Edward, while none but Miss Woodley knew, or had the most distant suspicion of the real cause.

Mrs. Horton and Miss Fenton, who were sitting together expatiating on the duplicity of their own sex in the instance just before them, had, notwithstanding the interest of the discourse, a longing desire to break it off ; for they were impatient to see this poor frail being whom they were loading with their innocent—as it was among friends—calumny. They longed to see if she would have the confidence to look them in the face : they, to whom she had so often protested, she had not the smallest at-

tachment to Lord Frederick but from motives of vanity.

These ladies heard with much satisfaction dinner was served, but met Miss Milner at table with a less degree of pleasure than they expected; for her mind was so totally abstracted from them, they could not discern a single blush, or confused glance, which their presence occasioned. No, Miss Milner had before them divulged nothing of which she was ashamed, she only was ashamed what she had said was not truth. In the bosom of Miss Woodley alone was that secret entrusted which could call a blush into her face, and before her she *did* feel confusion—before the gentle friend, to whom she had till this time communicated all her faults without embarrassment, she now cast down her eyes in shame, and scarce durst lift them up to meet her's.

At table there was little talking, and less eating; Miss Milner did not attempt to eat; Miss Woodley endeavoured, but could not.

Soon after the dinner was removed, Lord Elmwood entered; and that gallant nobleman declared—"Mr. Sandford had used him ill in not permitting him to accompany
ny

ny his relation ; for he feared Dorriforth would now throw himself upon the sword of Lord Frederick without a friend by to defend him.”—A rebuke from the eye of Miss Woodley, which from this day forward had a command over Miss Milner, restrained her from expressing the affright she suffered from this supposition of his lordship’s. Miss Fenton replied, “ As to that, my lord, I see no reason why Mr. Dorriforth and Lord Frederick should not now be friends.—“ Certainly,” said Mrs. Horton, “ for as soon as my Lord Frederick is made acquainted with Miss Milner’s confession, all differences must be reconciled.”—“ What confession ?” asked his lordship.

Miss Milner, to avoid hearing a repetition of that which gave her pain but to think of, arose in order to retire into her own apartment, but was obliged to sit down again—and received the assistance of her friend and Lord Elmwood to lead her into her dressing-room. Reclined upon a sofa there, a silence ensued between her and Miss Woodley for near half an hour ; and when the conversation began, the name of Dorriforth was never uttered—they were

both grown cool and considerate since the discovery, and both were equally ashamed and fearful of naming him.

The vanity of the world, the folly of riches, the pleasures of retirement, and such topics, engaged their discourse, but not their thoughts, for near two hours; and the first time the word Dorriforth was spoken, a servant with alacrity opened the dressing room door, without previously rapping, and cried, " Mr. Dorriforth, madam."

Dorriforth immediately came in, and went eagerly to Miss Milner.—Miss Woodley beheld the glow of joy, and guilt upon her face, and did not rise to give him her seat, as was her custom, if he came with intelligence to his ward, and she was sitting next her—he therefore stood while he repeated all that had happened in his interview with Lord Frederick.

But with her gladness to see her guardian safe, Miss Milner had forgot to enquire for the safety of his lordship; the man whom she had pretended to love so passionately—even a smile of rapture was upon her face, though Dorriforth might be returned from putting him to death. This
incongruity

incongruity of behaviour Miss Woodley saw, and was confounded—but Dorriforth, in whose thoughts a suspicion either of her love to him, or want of love for Lord Frederick, had not the smallest place, easily reconciled this inconsistency, and said,

“ You see by my countenance all is well, and therefore you smile on me before I tell you what has passed.”

This brought her to the recollection of her conduct, and now with a countenance constrained to some show of gravity, she tried to express alarm she did not feel.

“ Nay, I have the pleasure to assure you Lord Frederick is safe,” resumed Dorriforth, “ and the disgrace of his blow washed entirely away, by a few drops of blood from this arm,” and he laid his hand upon his left arm, which rested in his waistcoat as a sling.

She cast her eyes there, and seeing where the ball had entered the coat sleeve, she gave an involuntary scream, and sunk on the side of the sofa. Instead of that tender sympathy with which Miss Woodley used to attend her upon the slightest illness or affliction, she now addressed her in a sharp tone, and cried, “ Mi's Milner, you

have heard Lord Frederick is safe, you have then nothing to alarm you."—Nor did she run to offer a smelling bottle, or to raise her head. Her guardian seeing her near fainting, and without this assistance from her friend, was going himself to give it; but on this, Miss Woodley interfered, and having taken her head upon her arm, assured him, "It was a trifling weakness to which Miss Milner was accustomed, and that she would ring for her woman, who knew how to relieve her instantly with a few drops."—Satisfied with this, Dorri-forth left the room; and a surgeon being arrived to dress his wound, he retired into his own chamber.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE power delegated to the keeper of our secrets, Miss Woodley was the last person on earth to abuse—but she was also the last, who, by her complacency, would participate in the guilt of her friend—and there was no guilt, except that of murder, which

which she thought equal to the crime in question, provided it was ever perpetrated.—Adultery, her reason would perhaps have informed her, was a more pernicious evil to society ; but to a religious mind, what sounds so terrible as sacrilege ? Of vows made to God or to man, the former must weigh the heavier.—Moreover, the dreadful sin of infidelity in the marriage state, is much softened to a common understanding, by the frequency of the crime ; whereas, of vows broken by a devotee she had scarce heard of any ; or if any, they were generally followed by such examples of divine vengeance, such miraculous punishments in this world, (as well as eternal punishment in the other) that served to exaggerate their wickedness.

She, who could, and did pardon Miss Milner, was the person who saw her passion in the severest light, and resolved to take every method, however harsh, to root it from her heart—nor did she fear success, resting on the certain assurance, that however deep her love was fixed, it would never be returned. Yet this confidence did not prevent her taking every precaution, lest Dorriforth should come to the knowledge

ledge of it—she would not have his composed mind disturbed with such a thought—his steadfast principles so much as shook by the imagination—nor overwhelm him with those self-reproaches which his fatal attraction, unpremeditated as it was, would still have drawn upon him.

With this plan of concealment, in which the natural modesty of Miss Milner acquiesced, there was but one effort to make which that young lady was not prepared for; and that was an entire separation from her guardian.—She had, from the first, cherished her passion without the most distant prospect of a return—she was prepared to see Dorriforth without ever seeing him nearer to her than her guardian and friend, but not to see him at all—for that, she was not prepared.

But Miss Woodley reflected upon the inevitable necessity of this step before she made the proposal, and then made it with a firmness that might have done honour to the inflexibility of Dorriforth himself.

During the few days that intervened between her open confession of love for Lord Frederick, and this proposal, the most intricate incoherence appeared to the whole family,

family, in the character of Miss Milner—and in order to evade a marriage with his lordship, and to conceal, at the same time, the shameful propensity which lurked in her breast, she was once, even on the point of declaring a passion for Sir Edward Ashton.

In the duel which had taken place between Lord Frederick and Dorriforth, the latter had received his antagonist's fire, but positively refused to return it; by which he had kept his promise not to endanger his lordship's life, and had reconciled Sandford, in great measure, to his behaviour—and Sandford now (his resolution once broken) no longer refused entering Miss Milner's house, but came every time it was convenient, though he yet avoided its mistress as much as possible; or showed by every word and look, when she was present, that she was still less in his favour than she had ever been.

He visited Dorriforth on the evening after his engagement with Lord Frederick, and again the next morning breakfasted with him in his own chamber; nor did Miss Milner see her guardian since his first return from that engagement till the following noon. She enquired, however, of
the

the servant how his master did, and was rejoiced to hear his wound was but very slight—yet this enquiry she durst not make before Miss Woodley, but waited till she was absent.

When Dorriforth made his appearance the next day, it was evident he had thrown from his heart a load of cares; and though they had left a languor upon his face, there was content in his voice, his manners, in his every word and action.—Far from seeming to retain any resentment towards his ward, for the trouble and danger into which her imprudence had led him, he appeared rather to pity her weakness, and to wish to sooth the perturbation which the recollection of her own conduct had obviously raised in her mind—His endeavours were most successful—she was soothed every time he spoke to her; and had not the watchful eye of Miss Woodley stood guard over her inclinations, she had plainly evinced, she was enraptured with the joy of seeing him again himself, after the danger to which he had been exposed.

These emotions, which she laboured to subdue, passed, however, the bounds of her ineffectual resistance; when, at the time
of

of retiring after dinner, he said to her in a low voice, but such as it was meant the company should hear, "Do me the favour, Miss Milner, to call at my study sometime in the evening; I have to speak to you upon business."

She answered, "I will, Sir." And her eyes swam with delight in expectation of the interview.

Let not the reader, nevertheless, imagine, there was in that ardent expectation, one idea which the most spotless mind, in love, might not have indulged without reproach.—Sincere love, (at least among the delicate of the female sex) is often gratified by that degree of enjoyment, or rather forbearance, which would be torture in the pursuit of any other passion—real, delicate, and restrained love, like that of Miss Milner's, was indulged in the sight of the object only; and having bounded her wishes by her hopes, the height of her happiness was limited to a conversation in which no other but themselves partook a part.

Miss Woodley was one who heard the appointment, but the only one who conceived with what sensation it was received.

While

While the ladies remained in the same room with Dorriforth, Miss Milner thought of little, except of him—as soon as they withdrew into another apartment, she remembered Miss Woodley, and turning her head suddenly, saw Miss Woodley's face imprinted with suspicion and displeasure—this at first was painful to her—but recollecting that in a couple of hours time she was to meet her guardian alone—speak to him, and hear him speak to herself only—every other thought was absorbed in that one, and she considered with indifference, the uneasiness, or the anger of her friend.

Miss Milner, to do justice to her heart, did not wish to beguile Dorriforth into the snares of love.—Could any supernatural power have endowed her with the means, and at the same time shewn to her the ills that must arise from such an effect of her charms, she had assuredly enough of virtue to have declined the conquest; but without enquiring of herself what she proposed? She never saw him without previously endeavouring to look more attractive than she would have desired, in any other company.—And now, without listening to the thousand exhortations that were speaking

speaking in every feature of Miss Woodley's face, she flew to a looking-glass, to adjust her dress in a manner that she thought most enchanting.

Time stole away, and the time to go to her guardian arrived. In his presence, unsupported by the presence of a third person, every grace she had practised, every look she had borrowed to set off her charms were annihilated, and she became a native beauty, with the artless arguments of reason, only for her aid.—Awed thus, by his power, from every thing but what she really was, she never was perhaps half so bewitching as in those timid, respectful, and embarrassed moments she passed alone with him.—He caught at those times her respect, her diffidence, nay, even her embarrassment ; and never would one word of anger pass on either side.

On the present occasion, he first expressed the highest satisfaction that she had, at length, revealed to him the state of her mind.

“ And taking every thing into consideration, Miss Milner,” added he, “ I rejoice that your sentiments happen to be such as you have owned—for although my Lord
Frederick

Frederick is not the very man I could have wished for your perfect happiness, yet in the state of human perfection and human happiness, you might have fixed your affections with much less propriety; and yet, where my unwillingness to thwart your inclinations, might not have permitted me to contend with them."

Not a word of reply did this demand, or if it had, not a word could she have given.

"And now, madam, the reason of my desire to speak with you—is to know from yourself, the means you think most proper to pursue, in order to acquaint his lordship, that notwithstanding this late repulse, there are hopes of your partiality in his favour."

"Defer the explanation," returned she, eagerly.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Milner, that cannot be—besides, how can you indulge a disposition thus unpitying?—even so ardently did I desire to render his lordship happy, though he came armed against my life, that had I not reflected, previous to our engagement it would appear like fear, and the means of bartering for his forgiveness; I should have revealed your sentiments

timents the moment I had seen him.—When the engagement was over, I was too impatient to acquaint you of his safety, to think then on gratifying him.—And indeed, the delicacy of the declaration, after the many denials you have no doubt given him, should be considered—I therefore entreat your approbation of the manner in which it shall be made.”

“ Mr. Dorriforth, can you allow nothing to the moments of surprize? and that pity, which the fate impending inspired; and which might urge me to express myself of Lord Frederick, in a manner my cooler thoughts will not warrant?”

“ There was nothing in your expressions, my dear Miss Milner, the least equivocal—if you were off your guard, when you pleaded for Lord Frederick, as I believe you were, you said more sincerely what you thought; and no discreet, or rather indiscreet retractions, can make me change my opinion.”

“ I am very sorry,” she replied, confused, and trembling.

“ Why sorry? Come, give me commission to reveal these sentiments.—I’ll not be too hard upon you—a hint from me to his
lordship

lordship will do—hope, is ever apt to interpret the slightest words to its own use, and a lover's hope, is, beyond all others, sanguine."

"I never gave Lord Fredederick hope."

"But did you ever plunge him into despair?"

"His pursuit says I never have, but he has no other proof."

"However light and frivolous you have been upon frivolous subjects, yet I must own, Miss Milner, I expected, that when a case of this importance came seriously before you, you would have discovered a proper stability in your behaviour."

"I do, Sir; and it was only while I was affected with a weakness, which arose from accident, that I have ever shown an inconstitence."

"You then still assert you have no affection for my Lord Frederick?"

"Not sufficient to become his wife."

"You are alarmed at marriage, and I do not wonder you should be so; it shews a prudent foresight that does you honour—but, my dear, are there no dangers in a single state?—if I may judge, Miss Milner, there are many more to a young lady
of

of your accomplishments, than were you under the protection of a husband."

"My father, Mr. Dorriforth, thought your protection sufficient."

"But that protection was rather to direct your choice, than to be the cause of your not choosing at all.—Give me leave to point out an observation which, perhaps, I have too frequently done before, but upon this occasion I must intrude it once again—Miss Fenton is its object—her fortune is inferior to your's, her personal attractions less."——

Here the strong glow of joy, and of gratitude, for an opinion so negligently, and yet so sincerely expressed, flew to Miss Milner's face, neck, and even to her hands and fingers; the blood mounted to every part of her skin that was visible, for not a fibre but felt the secret transport, that Dorriforth thought her more beautiful than the beautiful Miss Fenton.

If he observed her blushes, he was unsuspicious of the cause, and went on.

"There is, besides, in the temper of Miss Fenton; a sedateness that might with less hazard secure her safety in an unmarried life; and yet she very properly thinks
it

it her duty, as she does not mean to seclude herself by any vows to the contrary, to become a wife—and in obedience to the counsel of her friends, will be married within a few weeks.”

“ Miss Fenton may marry from obedience, I never will.”

“ You mean to say, Love shall alone induce you ?

“ I do.”

“ If, madam, you would point out a subject upon which I am the least able to speak, and on which my sentiments, such as they are, are formed alone from theory (and even there instructed but with caution) it is the subject of love.—And yet, Miss Milner, even that little I know, tells me, without a doubt, that what you said to me yesterday, pleading for Lord Frederick’s life, was the result of the most violent and tender love.”

“ The *little you know* then, Mr. Dorriforth, has deceived you ; had you *known more*, you would have judged otherwise.”

“ I submit to the merit of your reply ; but without allowing me a judge at all, I will appeal to those who were present with me.”

“ Are

"Are Mrs. Horton and Mr. Sandford to be the connoisseurs?"

"No; I'll appeal to Miss Fenton and Miss Woodley."

"And yet, I believe," replied she with a smile, "I believe, theory, must only be the judge even there."

"Then from all you have said, madam, on this occasion, I am to conclude you still refuse to marry Lord Frederick?"

"You are."

"And you submit never to see him again?"

"I do."

"All you then said to me, yesterday, was false?"

"I was not mistress of myself at the time."

"Therefore it was truth—for shame, for shame!"

At that moment the door opened, and Mr. Sandford walked in—he started back on seeing Miss Milner, and was going away again; but Dorriforth called to him to stay, and said with warmth,

"Tell me, Mr. Sandford, by what power, by what persuasion, I can prevail upon
this

this lady to confide in me as her friend ; to lay her heart open, and credit mine when I declare to her, I have no view in all the advice I give, but her immediate welfare ?”

“ Mr. Dorriforth, you know my opinion of the lady,” replied, Sandford, “ it has been formed ever since my first acquaintance with her, and it still remains the same.”

“ But instruct me how I am to inspire her with confidence ;” returned Dorriforth, “ how I am to impress her with that which is for her advantage ?”

“ You can work no miracles,” replied Sandford, “ you are not holy enough.”

“ And yet, Miss Milner,” answered Dorriforth, “ appears to be acquainted with that mystery ; for what but the force of a miracle, can induce her to contradict, to-day, what before you, and several other witnesses, she positively acknowledged yesterday ?”

“ Do you call that miraculous ?” cried Sandford ; “ the miracles had been if she had not done so—for did she not yesterday contradict what she acknowledged the day before ?—

before?—and will she not, to-morrow, disavow what she says to-day?”

“ I wish she may,” replied Dorriforth, mildly, for he beheld the tears flowing down her face at the rough and severe manner in which Sandford had spoken, and began to feel for her uneasiness.

“ I beg pardon,” cried Sandford, “ for speaking so rudely to the mistress of the house—I have no business here, I know; but where you are, Mr. Dorriforth, unless I am turned out, I shall ever think it my duty to come.”

Miss Milner courtesied, as much as to say he was welcome to come.—He continued,

“ I was to blame, that on a nice punctilio, I left you so long without my visits, and without my counsel; in the time, you have run the hazard of being murdered, and what is worse, of being excommunicated; for had you been so rash as to have returned your opponent’s fire, not all my interest at Rome would have obtained remission of the punishment.”

Miss Milner, through all her tears, could not now restrain her laughter—on which he resumed;

“ And here do I venture like a missionary among savages—but if I can only save you from the scalping knives of some of them ; from the miseries which that lady is preparing for you, I am rewarded.”

Sandford spoke this with great fervour, and the crime of her love never appeared to Miss Milner in so tremendous a point of view as thus, unknowingly alluded to by him.

“ *The miseries that lady is preparing for you,*” hung upon her ears like the notes of a raven, and equally ominous.—The words “ *murder*” and “ *excommunication*” he had likewise uttered ; all the fatal effects of sacrilegious love.—Frightful superstitions struck to her heart, and she could scarcely prevent falling down under their oppression.

Dorriforth beheld the difficulty she had in sustaining herself, and went with the utmost tenderness and supported her ; saying, “ I beg your pardon—I invited you hither with a far different view than your uneasiness.”—

Sandford was beginning to speak. “ Hold, Mr. Sandford,” resumed he, “ the lady is under my protection, and I know

know not whether it is not necessary you should apologize to her, and to me, for what you have already said."

"You asked my opinion, or I had not given it you—would you have me, like her, speak what I do not think?"

"Say no more, Mr. Sandford," cried Dorriforth—and leading her kindly to the door, as if to defend her from his malice, told her, "he would take another opportunity to renew the subject."

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN Dorriforth was alone with Sandford, he explained to him what before, he had only hinted; and this learned jesuit frankly confessed, "That the mind of a woman was far above, or rather beneath, his comprehension."—It was so, indeed—for with all his penetration, and he had a great deal, he had not yet penetrated into the recesses of Miss Milner's heart.

Miss Woodley, to whom she repeated all that had passed between herself, her guardian, and Sandford, took this moment, during the alarm and agitation of her spirits, to alarm them still more by her prophetic insinuations; and at length represented to her here, for the first time, the necessity, "that Mr. Dorriforth and she should remain no longer under the same roof." This was like the stroke of sudden death to Miss Milner, and clinging to life, she endeavoured to avert the blow by prayers, and by promises—her friend loved her too sincerely, however, to be prevailed upon.

"But in what manner can I bring about the separation?" cried she, "for till I marry we are obliged, by my father's request, to live in the same house."

"Miss Milner," answered Miss Woodley, "much as I respect the will of a dying man, I regard your and Mr. Dorriforth's present and eternal happiness much more; and it is my resolution you *shall* part—if you will not contrive the means, that duty falls on me, and without any invention, I see the measure at once."

"What

“What is it?” cried Miss Milner, eagerly.

“To go and reveal to Mr. Dorriforth, without hesitation, the real state of your heart; which your present inconsistent conduct will but too readily confirm.”

“You would not plunge me into so much shame, into so much anguish!” cried she, distractedly.

“No,” replied Miss Woodley, “not for the world, provided you will separate from him, by any method of your own—but that you *shall* separate is my determination; and in spite of all your sufferings, this shall be the means, unless you instantly agree to some other.”

“Good Heaven, Miss Woodley! is this your friendship?”

“Yes—and the truest friendship I have to bestow.—I think what a task I undertake for your sake and his, when I condemn myself to explain to him your weakness—what astonishment! what confusion! what remorse, do I foresee painted upon his face!—I hear him call you by the harshest names, and behold him fly from your sight forever, as an object of his detestation.”

“ Oh spare the dreadful picture.—Fly from my sight for ever—detest my name. Oh! my dear Miss Woodley, let his friendship for me but still remain, and I will consent to do any thing.—You may command me—I will go away from him directly—but let us part in friendship—Oh! without the friendship of Mr. Dorriforth, life would be a heavy burthen indeed.”

Miss Woodley immediately began to plan schemes for their separation; and with all her invention alive on the subject, this was the only probable one she could form.

Miss Milner was to write to her distant relation at Bath, complaining of the melancholy of a country life, which she was to say her guardian imposed upon her, and entreat the lady to send a pressing invitation for her to pass a month or two with her; this invitation was to be shewn to Dorriforth for his approbation, and both Miss Woodley and Miss Milner were to enforce it, by expressing their earnest wishes for his consent. This plan properly regulated, the necessary letter was sent by Miss Milner to Bath, and Miss Woodley waited with patience, but with a watchful guard upon the
the

the conduct of her friend till the answer arrived.

During this interim a most tender and complaining epistle from Lord Frederick was delivered to Miss Milner ; to which, as he received no answer, his lordship prevailed upon his uncle, with whom he resided, to wait upon her, and obtain her verbal reply ; for he still flattered himself, fear of her guardian's anger, or perhaps his interception of the letter he had sent, was the cause of her seeming contempt.

The old gentleman was introduced to Miss Milner, and after to Mr. Dorriforth, but received from each an answer so explicit, that left his nephew no longer in doubt but all farther pursuit was vain.

Sir Edward Ashton about this time also, submitted to a formal dismissal, and had the mortification to reflect, he was bestowing upon the object of his affections the tenderest proof of his regard, by absenting himself wholly from her society.

Upon this serious and certain conclusion to the hopes of Lord Frederick, Dorriforth was more astonished than he had ever yet been at the conduct of his ward—he had once thought her behaviour, in respect to

his lordship, was ambiguous, but since her confession of a passion for him, he had no doubt in the end, she would become his wife.—He lamented to find himself mistaken, and now thought it proper to give some important marks of his condemnation of her pernicious caprice ; and not merely in words, but by the general tenour of his behaviour. He consequently became much more reserved, and more austere than he had been, since his first acquaintance with her ; for his manners, not from design, but unknowingly, were softened since his guardianship, by that tender respect he had never ceased to pay to the object of his protection.

Notwithstanding this severity he assumed, his ward in the prospect of parting from him grew melancholy ; Miss Woodley's love to her friend rendered her little otherwise ; and Dorriforth's peculiar gravity, oftentimes rigour, could not but make the whole party much less cheerful than they had been. Lord Elmwood too was lying dangerously ill of a fever ; Miss Fenton of course was as much in sorrow as her nature would suffer her to be, and both Sandford
and

and Dorriforth, in extreme concern on his lordship's account.

In this state of affairs, the letter of invitation arrives from Lady Luneham at Bath: it was shown to Dorriforth; and to prove to his ward he is so much offended, as no longer to feel that excessive interest in her concerns he once did, he gives his opinion on the subject with indifference—he desires “Miss Milner will do as she herself thinks proper.”—Miss Woodley instantly accepts this permission, writes back, and appoints the day her friend means to set off for the visit.

She is wounded to the heart by the cold and unkind manners of her guardian, but dares not take one method to retrieve his opinion.—Alone, and to Miss Woodley she sighs and weeps; he discovers her sorrow, and is doubtful whether the departure of Lord Frederick from that part of the country is not the cause.

When the day on which she was to set off for Bath, was within two days distance only, the behaviour of Dorriforth took, by degrees, its usual form; if not a greater share of polite and tender attention than ever.—It was the first time he had parted

from Miss Milner since he became her guardian, and he felt, upon the occasion, a reluctance.—He had been angry with her, he had shewn her he was so, and he now began to wish he had not.—She is not happy, (he considered within himself) every word and action declares she is not, and I may have been too severe, and added to her uneasiness.—“At least we will part on good terms.”—Said he, “Indeed my regard for her is such, I cannot part otherwise.”

She soon discerned his returning kindness, and it was a gentle tie that would have fastened her to the spot where she was, but for the firm resistance of Miss Woodley.

“What will a few months absence effect?” cried she, pleading her cause; “at the end of a few months at farthest, he will expect me back, and where will be the merit in this short separation?”

“In that time,” replied Miss Woodley, “we may find some method to make it still longer.”—To this she listened with a kind of despair, but uttered she “was resigned;” and accordingly prepared for her departure.

Dorriforth

Dorriforth was all anxiety that every circumstance of her journey should be commodious; he was eager she should be happy, and he was eager she should see he entirely forgave her.—He would have gone part of the way with her, but for the extreme illness of Lord Elmwood, in whose chamber he passed the chief of the day, and slept in Elmwood House every night.

On the morning of her journey, when Dorriforth gave his hand and conducted Miss Milner to the carriage, all the way he led her she could not restrain a flood of tears; which encreased, as he parted from her, to convulsive sobs.—He was affected; and notwithstanding he had previously bid her farewell, he drew her gently on one side and said, with his eyes moistened from regard of the most laudable nature;

“My dear Miss Milner, we part friends?—I hope we do?—on my side, depend upon it, I regret nothing so much at this short separation, as having ever given you a moment’s pain.”

“I believe so,” was all she could say; for she hastened to break from him, lest his discerning eye should discover the cause of the weakness which thus overcame her.

—But

—But her apprehensions were groundless; the rectitude of his own heart was a bar to the suspicion of her's.—He once more kindly bade her adieu, and the carriage drove away.

Miss Fenton and Miss Woodley accompanied Miss Milner part of the journey, about thirty miles, where they were met by Sir Harry and Lady Luneham.—Here was a parting nearly as affecting as that between her and her guardian. Miss Woodley, who for several weeks had treated her friend with a rigidity she herself hardly supposed was in her nature, now bewailed her own severity, begged her forgiveness, promised to correspond with her punctually, and to omit no opportunity of giving her every consolation short of cherishing her fatal passion; but in that, and that only, was the heart of Miss Milner to be consoled.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Miss Milner arrived at Bath, she thought it the most altered place she had ever seen—she was mistaken—it was she herself, who was changed.

The walks were melancholy, the company insipid, the ball-room fatiguing—in fine, she had left behind all that could charm or please her.

Though she found herself far less happy than when she was at Bath before, yet she felt, she would not, to enjoy all that past happiness, be again reduced to the being she was at that time. Thus, does the lover consider the extinction of his passion, with the same horror as the libertine looks upon annihilation; the one would rather live hereafter (though in all the tortures with which his future state is described) than cease to exist; so there are no tortures a lover would not suffer, rather than cease to love.

In the wide prospect of melancholy before her, Miss Milner's fancy caught hold of the only comfort which presented itself; and

and this, slender as it was, in the total absence of every other, her imagination pictured as excessive. The comfort was a letter from Miss Woodley—a letter wherein the subject of her love would most assuredly be mentioned, and in whatever terms, must still be the means of delight.

A letter arrived—she devoured it with her eyes.—The post-mark on the outside denoting from whence it came, the name of “Milner Lodge” written on the top, were all sources of pleasure—and she read slowly every line it contained to procrastinate the pleasing expectation she enjoyed, till she should arrive at the name of Dorriforth. At last her impatient eye, caught the word three lines beyond the place she was reading—irresistibly, she skipped over those lines, and fixed on the point to which she was attracted.

Miss Woodley was cautious in her indulgence; she made the slightest mention of Dorriforth, saying only, “He was extremely concerned, and even dejected, at the little hope there was of his cousin, Lord Elmwood’s, recovery.”—Short and trivial as this passage was, it was still more important to Miss Milner than any other in the

the letter—she read it again and again, considered, and reflected upon it.—Dejected, thought she, what does that word exactly mean?—did I ever see Mr. Dorri-forth dejected?—how, I wonder, does he look in that state?—Thus did she muse, while the cause of his dejection, though a most serious one, and pathetically described by Miss Woodley, scarce arrested her attention once.—She run over with haste the account of Lord Elmwood's state of health; she certainly pitied him while she thought of him, but she did not think of him long. To die was a hard fate for a young nobleman just in possession of his immense fortune, and on the eve of marriage with a beautiful young woman; but Miss Milner thought Heaven might be still better than all this, and she had no doubt but his lordship would go there. The forlorn state of Miss Fenton ought to have been a subject for compassion, but she knew that lady had resignation to bear any lot with patience, and that a trial of her fortitude might be more flattering to her vanity than to be Countess of Elmwood: in a word, she saw nobody's misfortunes equal to her own, be-
cause

cause she saw no one so little able to bear misfortune.

She replied to Miss Woodley's letter, and dwelt very long on that subject which Miss Woodley had taken care to pass over lightly; this was another indulgence; and to hear from, and to write to her friend, were now the only enjoyments she possessed. From Bath Miss Milner paid several festive visits with Lady Luneham—all were alike tedious and melancholy.

But her guardian wrote to her, and though the subject was sorrowful, the letter gave her joy—the sentiments it expressed were but trite and common-place, yet she valued them as the dearest effusions of friendship and affection; and her hand trembled, and her heart beat with rapture while she wrote the answer, tho' she knew it would not be received with one emotion, such as those which she experienced. In her second letter to Miss Woodley she prayed like a person insane to be taken home from confinement, and like a lunatic protested, in sensible language, she “had no disorder.” But her friend replied, “that very declaration proves its violence.” And assured her that nothing less than placing her

her

her affections elsewhere, should induce her to believe, but that she was incurable.

Miss Woodley's third letter acquainted Miss Milner with the death of Lord Elmwood—Miss Woodley was exceedingly affected by this event, and said little else on any other subject.—Miss Milner was shocked when she read the words “ he is dead,” and instantly thought, “ How transient are all sublunary things!—within a few years *I* shall be dead—and how felicitous will it then be, if I have resisted every temptation to the delusive pleasures of this life !”—The happiness of a peaceful death occupied her contemplation for near an hour ; but at length every virtuous and pious sentiment this meditation inspired, served but to remind her of the many sentences she had heard fall from her guardian's lips upon the same subject—her thoughts were again fixed on him, and she could think of nothing beside.

In a very short time after, her health became impaired from the indisposition of her mind ; she languished, and was once in imminent danger. During a slight delirium of her fever, Miss Woodley's name and her guardian's were repeated incessantly ;

stantly ; Lady Luneham sent them immediate word of this, and they both hastened to Bath, and arrived there, just as her disorder had taken a most favourable turn. As soon as she became perfectly recollected, her first care was, knowing the frailty of her heart, to enquire what she had uttered while delirious.—Miss Woodley, who was by her bed-side, begged her not to be alarmed on that account, and assured her she knew, from all her attendants, that she had only spoken with a friendly remembrance (as was really the case) of those persons who were dear to her.

She wished to know whether her guardian was come to see her, but she had not the courage to ask before Miss Woodley ; and her friend was afraid, by the too sudden mention of his name, to discompose her. Her woman, however, after some little time, entered the chamber and whispered Miss Woodley. Miss Milner asked inquisitively “ What she said ? ” and the woman going to her, replied softly, “ Lord Elmwood, madam, would wish to come and see you for a few moments, if you will allow him ? ” Miss Milner turned her head, and stared wildly.

“ I thought,”

"I thought," said she, "I thought Lord Elmwood had been dead—are my senses disordered still?"

"No, my dear," answered Miss Woodley, "it is the present Lord Elmwood who wishes to see you; he whom you left ill when you came hither *is* dead."

"And who is the present Lord Elmwood?" she asked.

Miss Woodley after a short hesitation replied—"Your guardian."

"And so he is," cried Miss Milner, "he is the next heir—I had forgot.—But is it possible he is here?"

"Yes—" returned Miss Woodley with a grave voice and manner, to moderate that glow of satisfaction which for a moment sparkled even in her languid eye, and blushed over her pallid countenance—"Yes—as he heard you were ill, he thought it right to come and see you."

"He is very good," answered she, and the tears started in her eyes.

"Would you please to admit his lordship?" asked her woman.

"Not yet, not yet," she replied, "let me recollect myself first." And she looked
with

with a timid doubt upon her friend, to ask if it was proper.

Miss Woodley could scarce support this humble reference to her judgment from the wan face of the poor invalid, and taking her by the hand, whispered, in tears, "You shall do what you please."—In a few minutes Lord Elmwood was introduced.

To those who sincerely love, every change of situation or circumstances in the object beloved, appears an advantage.—So, the acquisition of a title and estate, was in Miss Milner's eye an immeasurable advantage to her guardian, not on the score of their real value, but any change instead of diminishing her passion would have served but to encrease it—even a change to the utmost poverty.

When he entered, the sight of him seemed to be too much for her, and after the first glance she turned her head away—the sound of his voice encouraged her, however, to look once more—and now she rivetted her eyes upon him.

"It is impossible, my dear Miss Milner," he gently whispered, "to say, the joy I feel that your disorder has subsided."

But

But though it was impossible to say, it was possible to *look* what he felt, and his looks expressed his feelings.—In the zeal of those sensations, he laid hold of her hand, and held it between his—this he himself did not know—but she did.

“ You have prayed for me, my lord, I dare say ?” Said she, with a smile of thanks for those prayers.

“ Fervently, ardently !” —returned he ; and the fervency with which he prayed, spoke in every feature.

“ But I am a protestant, my Lord, and if I had died such, do you believe I should have gone to Heaven ?”

“ Most assuredly, that would not have prevented you.”

“ But Mr. Sandford does not think so.”

“ He must ; for he means to go there himself.”

To keep her guardian with her, Miss Milner seemed inclined to converse ; but Miss Woodley perceived the temporal as well as the spiritual evil of this, and advised his lordship to retire.

They had only one more interview before he left the place ; at which Miss Milner was capable of sitting up—he was with her, however,

however, but a very short time, some necessary concerns relative to the late Lord Elmwood's affairs, calling him in haste to London. Miss Woodley continued with her friend till she saw her entirely reinstated in her health: during which time his lordship was frequently the subject of their private conversation; and upon those occasions Miss Milner has sometimes brought Miss Woodley to a cknowledge, "That could Mr. Dorriforth have foreseen the early death of the late Lord Elmwood, it had been for the greater honour of his religion (considering that ancient title would now after him become extinct), had he preferred marriage vows, to those of celibacy."

CHAPTER XIX.

WHEN the time for Miss Woodley to depart arrived, Miss Milner entreated earnestly to accompany her home, and made the most solemn promises that she would guard not only her behaviour, but her very thoughts, within the limitation her friend should prescribe. Miss Woodley at length yielded thus much, "That as soon as Lord Elmwood

Elmwood was set out on his journey to Italy, where she had heard him say he should shortly be obliged to go, she would no longer deny her the pleasure of returning; and if (after the long absence which must consequently take place between him and her) she should then, positively affirm the suppression of her passion was the happy result, she would at that time take her word, and risk the danger of their once more residing together."

With this concession on the side of Miss Woodley they parted; and as winter was now far advanced, that lady returned to her aunt's house in town, from whence Mrs. Horton was, however, preparing to remove, in order to superintend Lord Elmwood's house, (which had been occupied by the late Earl,) in Grosvenor-square; and Miss Woodley was to accompany her.

If Lord Elmwood was not desirous Miss Milner should conclude her visit and return to his protection, it was partly from the multiplicity of affairs in which he was this time engaged, and partly from having Mr. Sandford now entirely placed with him as his chaplain; for he dreaded that living in the same house their natural antipathy might

might be encreased to aversion—upon this account he once thought of advising Mr. Sandford to take up his abode elsewhere; but the great pleasure his lordship took in his society, joined to the great mortification he knew such a proposal would be to his friend, would not suffer him to make it.

Miss Milner all this time was not thinking upon those she hated, but on those she loved.——Sandford never came into her thoughts, while the image of Lord Elmwood never left them. One morning, as she sat talking to Lady Luneham on various subjects, but thinking alone on him; Sir Harry, with another gentleman, a Mr. Fleetmond, came in, and the conversation turned upon the great improbability there was, during the present Lord Elmwood's youth, that he should ever inherit the title and estate that had now fallen to him—and said Mr. Fleetmond, "Independent of the fortune, it must be matter of infinite joy to Dorriforth."—"No," answered Sir Harry, "independent of the fortune, it must be a motive of concern to him; for he must now regret, beyond measure, his folly in taking priest's orders—thus depriving

priving himself of the hopes of an heir, by which the title, at his death, will be lost."

"By no means," replied Mr. Fleetmond, "he may yet have an heir, for he will certainly marry."

"Marry!" cried Sir Harry.

"Yes," answered the other, "it was that I meant by the joy it might probably give him, beyond the possession of his estate and title."

"How be married?" said Lady Luneham, "Has he not taken a vow never to marry?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Fleetmond, "but there are no religious vows, from which the great Pontiff of Rome cannot grant a dispensation—those commandments made by the church, the church has always the power to dispense withal; and when it is for the general good of religion, his holiness thinks it incumbent on him, to publish his bull to remit all pains and penalties for their non-observance; and certainly it is for the honour of the catholics, that this earldom should continue in a catholic family—In short, I'll lay a wager my lord Elmwood is married within the twelve-month.

Miss Milner, who listened with attention, feared she was in a dream, or deceived by the pretended knowledge of Mr. Fleetmond, who might know nothing—but on consideration, all that he had said was very probable; and to confirm its truth, he was himself a Roman Catholic, and must be well informed on the subject upon which he spoke——If she had heard the direst news that ever sounded in the ears of the most susceptible of mortals, the agitation of her mind and person could not have been stronger—she felt, while every word was speaking, a chill through all her veins—it was a pleasure too exquisite, not to bear along with it the sensation of exquisite pain; of which she was so sensible, that for a few moments it caused her to wish she had not heard the intelligence; though, very soon after, she would not but have heard it for the world.

As soon as she had recovered from her first astonishment and joy, she wrote to Miss Woodley an exact account of what she had heard, and received this answer.

“ I am sorry any body should have given you this piece of information, because it was a task, in the executing of which

“ which, I had promised myself the most
“ extreme satisfaction—but the fear your
“ health was not sufficiently returned to
“ support, without danger, the burthen of
“ hopes which I knew would, upon this
“ occasion, press upon you, I deferred my
“ pleasing communication, and have had
“ it anticipated. Yet, as you seem in the
“ utmost doubt as to the truth of what you
“ have been told, perhaps this confirma-
“ tion of it, may fall little short of the first
“ news; especially when it is strengthened
“ by my entreating you to come to us, as
“ soon as you can with propriety leave
“ Lady Luneham.

“ Come, my dear Miss Milner, and
“ find in your once rigid monitor, a faith-
“ ful confidant—I will no longer threaten
“ to disclose a secret you have trusted me
“ with, but leave it to the wisdom and
“ sensibility of his heart, (who is now to
“ penetrate into the hearts of our sex, in
“ search of one consonant to his own) to
“ find it out.—I no longer condemn, but
“ congratulate you on your passion; and
“ will assist you with all my advice and
“ earnest wishes, that you may obtain a
“ return.”

This letter was another of those excruciating pleasures, that nearly reduced Miss Milner to the grave—it took away from her all appetite to food, and from her eyes the power of being closed for several nights—she thought so much upon the prospect of accomplishing her wishes, that she could think of nothing beside; not even invent a probable excuse for leaving Lady Lunham, before the appointed time, which was yet two months to come. She wrote to Miss Woodley to beg her contrivance, to reproach her for keeping the secret so long from her, and to thank her for having revealed it to her in so kind a manner at last.—She begged also to be acquainted how Mr. Dorriforth (for still she called him by that name) spoke and thought of this sudden change in his destiny.

Miss Woodley's reply was a summons for her to town upon some pretended business, which she avoided explaining, but which entirely silenced her ladyship's entreaties for her stay.

To her question concerning Lord Elmwood she answered, “It is a subject on which he seldom speaks—he appears just the same he ever did, nor could you by
any

any part of his conduct, conceive that any such change had taken place." Miss Milner exclaimed to herself, "I am glad he is not altered—if his words, looks, or manners were any thing different from what they formerly were, I should not like him so well." And just the reverse would have been the case, had Miss Woodley sent her word he was changed. The day for her leaving Bath was fixed; she expected it with rapture, but before its arrival sunk under the care of expectation; and when it came, was so much indisposed as to be forced to defer her journey for a week.

At length she found herself in London—in the house of her guardian—and that guardian no longer bound to a single life, but *enjoined* to marry. He appeared in her eyes, as in Miss Woodley's, the same as ever; or perhaps more endearing than ever, as it was the first time she had beheld him with hope.—Mr. Sandford did *not* appear the same; yet he was in reality as surly and as disrespectful in his behaviour to her as usual; but she did not observe, or she did not feel his morose temper as heretofore—he seemed amiable, mild, and gentle; at least such was the happy medi-

um through which she saw him now; for good humour, like the jaundice, makes every one of its own complexion.

CHAPTER XX.

LORD Elmwood was preparing to go abroad to receive in form, the dispensation from his vows; it was, however, a subject he seemed carefully to avoid speaking upon; and when by any accident he was obliged to mention it, it was without any marks either of satisfaction or concern.

Miss Milner's pride, for the first time, began to take the alarm—while he was Mr. Dorriforth, and confined to a single life, his indifference to her charms was rather an honourable, than a reproachful trait in his character, and in reality she admired him for the insensibility—but on the eve of being at liberty, and on the eve of making his choice, she was offended that choice was not immediately fixed upon her—She had been accustomed to receive the devotion of every man who saw her, and
not

not to obtain it of the man from whom, of all others, she most wished it, was cruelly humiliating.—She complained to Miss Woodley, who advised her to have patience, but that was one of the virtues in which she was the least practised.

Encouraged, nevertheless, by her friend in the commendable desire of gaining the affections of him, who possessed all her's, she, however, left no means unattempted to make the conquest—but she began with too great certainty of success, not to be sensible of the deepest mortification in the disappointment—nay, she anticipated a disappointment, as she had before anticipated her success, and by turns felt the keenest emotions from hope and from despair.

As these passions alternately governed her, she was alternately in spirits or dejected; in good or in ill humour; and the frequent vicissitudes of her prospects, at length gave to her behaviour an air of capriciousness, which not all her follies had till now produced.—This was not the way to obtain the affections of Lord Elmwood; she knew it was not; and before him she was under some restriction.—Sandford observed this, and added to her many other

failings, hypocrisy. It was plain to Mr. Sandford esteemed her less and less every day ; and as he was the person who most of all influenced the opinion of her guardian, he became to her, very soon, an object not merely of dislike, but of abhorrence.

These sentiments for each other, were discoverable in every word and action while they were in each other's company ; but still in his absence, Miss Milner's good nature, and little malice, never suffered her to utter a sentence injurious to his interest. —Sandford's charity did not extend thus far ; and speaking of her with severity one evening while she was at the opera, " His meaning," as he said, " but to caution her guardian against her faults." Lord Elmwood replied,

" There is one fault, however, Mr. Sandford, I cannot lay to her charge."

" And what is that, my lord ?" (cried Sandford, eagerly) " What is that one fault, which Miss Milner has not ?"

" I never," replied his lordship, " heard Miss Milner, in your absence, utter a syllable to your disadvantage."

" She

"She durst not, my lord, because she is in fear of you; and she knows you would not suffer it."

"She then," answered his lordship, "pays me a much higher compliment than you do; for you freely censure her, and yet imagine I will suffer it."

"My lord," replied Sandford, "I am undeceived now, and shall never take that liberty again."

As his lordship always treated Sandford with the utmost respect, he began to fear he had been deficient upon this occasion; and the disposition which had induced him to take his ward's part, was likely, in the end, to prove unfavourable to her; for perceiving Sandford was offended at what had passed, as the only means of retribution, his lordship began himself to lament her volatile and captious propensities; in which lamentation Sandford, now forgetting his affront, joined with the heartiest concurrence, adding,

"That you, Sir, having now other cares to employ your thoughts, ought to insist upon her marrying, or her retiring wholly into the country."

H 5 She

She returned home just as this conversation was finished, and Sandford the moment she entered rung for his candle to retire. Miss Woodley, who had been at the opera with Miss Milner, cried,

“ Bless me, Mr. Sandford, are you not well ; you are going to leave us so early ? ”

He replied, “ No, I have a pain in my head.”

Miss Milner, who never heard complaints without sympathy, rose immediately from her seat, saying,

“ I think I never heard you, Mr. Sandford, complain of indisposition before—will you accept of my specific for the head-ach ? indeed it is a certain relief—I’ll fetch it instantly.”

She went hastily out of the room, and returned with a bottle, which, she assured him, “ was a present from lady Luneham, and would certainly cure him.”—And she pressed it upon him with such an anxious earnestness, that with all his churlishness he could not refuse taking it.

This was but a common-place civility, such as is paid by one enemy to another every day ; but the *manner* was the material part—the unaffected concern, the attention,

tention, the good will, she demonstrated in this little incident, was that which was remarkable ; and which immediately took from lord Elmwood the displeasure to which he had been just before excited, or rather transformed it into a degree of admiration. Even Sandford was not insensible to her behaviour, and in return, when he left the room, " wished her a good night."

To her and to Miss Woodley, who had not been witnesses of the preceding conversation, what she had done appeared of no merit, but to the mind of lord Elmwood it had much ; and upon the departure of Sandford he began to be unusually cheerful. He first, reproached the ladies for not offering him a place in their box at the opera.

" Would you have gone, my lord ?" asked Miss Milner, highly delighted.

" Certainly," returned he, " had you invited me."

" Then from this day, my lord, I give you a general invitation : nor shall any other company be admitted, but what you approve."

" I am very much obliged to you," answered his lordship.

" And

“And you,” continued she, “who have been only accustomed to church-musick, will be more than any one, enchanted on hearing the soft, harmonious sounds of love.”

“What ravishing pleasures are you preparing for me!” returned he, “I know not whether my weak senses will be able to support them.”

She had her eyes upon him as he spoke this, and discovered in his, which were fixed upon her, a sensibility unexpected—a kind of fascination, which enticed her to look on, while her eye-lids fell involuntarily before its mighty force; and a thousand blushes crowded over her face.—He was struck with these sudden signals; hastily recalled his former countenance, and stopt the conversation.

Miss Woodley, who had been a silent observer for some time, now thought a word or two from her, would be acceptable rather than troublesome.

“And pray, my lord,” said she, when do you go to France?”

“To Italy you mean,”—said he, “not at all—my superiors are very indulgent, for they dispense with all my duties.—I
ought,

ought, and meant, to have gone abroad; but as variety of concerns require my presence in England, every necessary ceremony has taken place here."

"Then your lordship is no longer in orders?" said Miss Woodley.

"No, they have been resigned these five days."

"My lord, I give you joy," said Miss Milner.

He thanked her, but added with a sigh, "If I have given up content in search of joy, I shall probably be a loser by the venture.—Soon after this, he wished the ladies good night, and retired.

Happy as Miss Milner found herself in his company, she saw him leave the room with infinite satisfaction, because her heart was impatient to give a loose to its hopes on the bosom of Miss Woodley.—She bade Mrs. Horton immediately good night, and in her friend's apartment gave way to all the language of the tenderest passion, warm with the confidence of meeting its return.—She described the sentiments she had read in Lord Elmwood's looks, and though Miss Woodley had beheld them too, Miss Milner's fancy heightened every glance; and

and her construction became, by degrees, so extremely favourable to her own wishes, that had not her friend been present, and known in what measure to estimate those symptoms; she must infallibly have thought by the joy to which they gave birth, his lordship had openly avowed a passion for her.

Miss Woodley, therefore, thought it her duty to allay those extacies, and represented to her, she might be deceived in her hopes—or even supposing his lordship's inclinations tended towards her, there were yet great obstacles between them.—“Would Sandford, who governed, or at least directed his almost every thought and purpose, not be consulted upon this? and if he was; on what, but the most romantic affection on the part of lord Elmwood, had Miss Milner to depend? and his lordship was not a man to be suspected of submitting to the excess of any passion.”—Thus did Miss Woodley argue, for fear her friend should be misled by her wishes, yet in her own mind she scarce harboured a doubt that any thing would thwart them.—The succeeding circumstance proved she was mistaken.

Another

Another gentleman of family and fortune made overtures to Miss Milner ; and her guardian, so far from having his thoughts inclined towards her on his own account, pleaded this lover's cause even with more zeal, than he had formerly pleaded for Sir Edward and lord Frederick ; and thus at once destroyed all those plans of happiness poor Miss Milner had meditated.

In consequence, her melancholy humour was now predominant ; and for several days she staid entirely at home, and yet was denied to all her visitants.—Whether this arose from pure melancholy, or the still lingering hope of making her conquest, by that sedateness of manners she knew her guardian admired, perhaps she herself did not know.—Be that as it may, lord Elmwood could not but observe this change, and one morning thought fit to mention, and applaud it.

Miss Woodley and she were working together when he came into the room ; and after sitting several minutes, and talking upon indifferent subjects ; to which his ward replied with a dejection in her voice and manner—he said,

“ Perhaps

"Perhaps I am wrong, Miss Milner, but I have observed you are lately grown more thoughtful than usual."

She blushed, as she always did when the subject was herself.—He continued, "Your health appears perfectly restored, and yet you do not take delight in your former recreations."

"Are you sorry for that, my lord?"

"No madam, I am extremely glad; and I was going to congratulate you upon the change—but give me leave to enquire, to what lucky accident we are to attribute this alteration?"

"Your lordship then thinks all my commendable deeds, arise from accident; and that I have no virtues of my own."

"Pardon me, Miss Milner, I think you have many." This he spoke emphatically; and the blood flowed to her face more than at first.

He resumed—"How can I doubt of a lady's virtues, when her countenance gives such evident proofs of them?—believe me, Miss Milner, that in the midst of your gayest follies; while you thus continue to blush, I shall reverence your internal sensations."

"Oh!

“ Oh! my lord, did you know some of them, I am afraid you would think them unpardonable.”

This was so much to the purpose, Miss Woodley found herself uneasy—but she needed not—Miss Milner loved too sincerely, to reveal it to the object.—His lordship answered,

“ And did you, Miss Milner, know some of mine, you might think them equally unpardonable.”

She turned pale, and could no longer guide her needle—in the fond transports of her heart she imagined, the sensations to which he alluded, was his love for her.—She was too much embarrassed to reply, and he continued,

“ We have all a great deal to pardon in one another; and I know not whether the officious person who forces, even his good advice, is not as blameable as the obstinate one, who will not listen to it.—And now, having made a preface to excuse you, should you once more refuse mine, I will venture to give it.”

“ My lord,” returned she, “ I have never yet refused to follow your advice, but where my own peace of mind was so nearly

nearly concerned, as to have made me culpable, had I complied."

"Well, madam, I submit to your determinations; and shall never again oppose your inclination to remain single."

This sentence, as it excluded his ever soliciting for himself, gave her the utmost pain; and she cast a glance of her eye at him full of reproach.—He did not observe it, but went on.

"Continuing unmarried, it seems to have been your father's intention, you should continue under my immediate care; but as I mean for the future to reside chiefly in the country—answer me candidly, do you think you could be happy there, for at least three parts of the year?"

"After a short hesitation, she replied, —"I have no objection."

"I am glad to hear it," he returned eagerly, "for it is my earnest desire to have you with me—your welfare is dear to me as my own; and were we apart, continual apprehensions would prey upon my mind."

The tear started in her eye, at the earnestness with which this was spoken;—he saw it, and to soften her still more with the
sense

sense of his esteem for her, he encreased his earnestness while he said,

“ If you will take the resolution to quit London for the time I mention, there shall be no means unemployed to make the country all you can wish—I shall insist upon Miss Woodley’s accompanying you ; and it will not only be *my* study to form such a society as you may approve, but I am certain it will be likewise the study of lady Elmwood——”

He was going on, but as if a poniard had thrust her heart, she writhed under this unexpected stroke.

He saw her countenance change— he looked at her steadfastly.

It was not a common change from joy to sorrow, from content to uneasiness, which Miss Milner discovered—she felt, and she expressed anguish.—Lord Elmwood was alarmed and shocked.—She did not weep, but she called Miss Woodley to come to her, with a voice that indicated a degree of agony.

“ My lord,” (cried Miss Woodley, seeing his consternation, and trembling lest he should guess the secret), “ My lord, Miss Milner has again deceived you—you must

must not take her from London—it is that, which is the cause of her uneasiness.”

He seemed more amazed still, and still more shocked at her duplicity than at her torture.—“Good Heaven,” exclaimed he, “how am I to accomplish her wishes? what am I to do? how can I judge, while she will not confide in me, but thus grossly deceives me?”

She leaned, pale as death, on the shoulder of Miss Woodley, her eyes fixed, with a seeming insensibility to all that was said, while he continued,

“Heaven is my witness, if I knew—if I could conceive the means how to make her happy, I would sacrifice my own happiness to her’s.”

“My lord,” cried Miss Woodley with a smile, “perhaps I may call upon you hereafter, to fulfil your word.”

He was totally ignorant what she meant, nor had he leisure from the confusion of his thoughts to reflect upon her meaning; he nevertheless replied, with warmth, “Do—you will find I’ll perform it.—Do—I will faithfully perform it.”

Though Miss Milner was conscious this declaration could not, in delicacy, ever be brought

brought against him; yet the fervent and solemn manner in which he made it, cheered her spirits; and as persons enjoy the reflection of having in their possession some valuable gem, although they are determined never to use it, so she upon this, was comforted and grew better.—She now lifted up her head from Miss Woodley, and leaned it on her hand as she sat by the side of a table—still she did not speak, but seemed overcome with sorrow.—As her situation became, however, less alarming; her guardian's pity and affright began to take the colour of resentment; and though he did not say so, he was, and looked highly offended.

At this juncture Mr. Sandford entered.—On beholding the present party, it needed not his sagacity to see, at the first view, they were all uneasy; but instead of the sympathy this might have excited in some dispositions, Mr. Sandford, after casting a look at each of them, appeared in high spirits.

“You seem unhappy, my lord.” Said he, with a smile.

“You do *not*—Mr. Sandford,” replied his lordship.

No,

“No, my lord, nor would I, were I in your situation,”—returned he. “What should make a man of sense out of temper but a worthy object?”—And he looked at Miss Milner.

“There are no objects unworthy our care,” replied Lord Elmwood.

“But there are objects on whom all care is fruitless, your lordship will allow.”

“I never yet despaired of any one, Mr. Sandford.”

“And yet there are persons, of whom it is presumption, to entertain hopes.”—and he looked again at Miss Milner.

“Does your head ach, Miss Milner?” Asked Miss Woodley, seeing her hold it with her hand.

“Very much,” returned she.

“Mr. Sandford,” said Miss Woodley, “Did you use all those drops Miss Milner gave you for a pain in the head?”

“Yes,” answered he, “I did.”—But the question at that moment somewhat embarrassed him.

“And I hope you found benefit from them,” said Miss Milner, with great kindness, as she rose from her seat, and walked slowly and despondently out of the room.

Though

Though Miss Woodley followed her, so that Mr. Sandford was left alone with Lord Elmwood, and might have continued his unkind insinuations without one restraint; yet his lips were closed for the present.—He looked down on the carpet—twitched himself upon his chair—and began to talk of the weather.

CHAPTER XXI.

AS soon as the first transports of despair was over, Miss Milner suffered herself to be once more in hope—she found there were no other means to support her life; and to her no small joy, her friend Miss Woodley was much less severe on the present occasion than she expected—No engagement between mortals, was, in Miss Woodley's opinion, binding like that entered into with heaven; and whatever vows Lord Elmwood had made to another, she justly supposed, no woman's love for him equalled Miss Milner's—it was prior to
all

all others too, and that established a claim, at least to contend for success; and in a contention, what rival would not fall before her?

It was not difficult to guess who this rival was; or if they were a little time in suspense, Miss Woodley soon arrived at the certainty, by inquiring of Mr. Sandford; who, unsuspicious why she asked, readily informed her the intended Lady Elmwood, was no other than Miss Fenton; and that her marriage with his lordship would be solemnized as soon as the mourning for the late lord Elmwood was expired.—This last intelligence made Miss Woodley shudder—however, she repeated it to Miss Milner, word for word.

Happy! happy, woman!” exclaimed Miss Milner of Miss Fenton; “she has received the first fond impulses of his heart, and has had the transcendent happiness of teaching him to love!

“By no means,” returned Miss Woodley, finding there was no other method to comfort her; “do not suppose Lord Elmwood’s marriage is the result of love—it is no more than a duty, a necessary piece of business, and this you may plainly see by
the

the wife on whom he has fixed.—Miss Fenton was thought a proper match for his cousin, and this same propriety, you must perceive, still exists.”

It was easy to convince Miss Milner all her friend said was truth, for she wished it to be so. “And oh!” she exclaimed, “could I but stimulate passion, in the place of propriety——do you think my dear Miss Woodley,” (and she looked with such begging eyes, it was impossible not to answer as she wished,) “do you think it would be unjust to Miss Fenton, were I to inspire her destined husband with a passion which she may not have inspired, and which I believe she herself cannot feel?”

Miss Woodley paused a minute, and then answered, “No;”—but there was a hesitation in her manner of delivery—she did say, “No,” but she looked as if she was afraid she ought to have said “Yes.”—Miss Milner, however, did not wait to give her time to recall the word, or to alter its meaning by adding others to it, but run on eagerly, and declared, “As that was her opinion, she would abide by it, and do all she could to supplant her rival.”—In order, nevertheless, to justify this determination, and

satisfy the conscience of Miss Woodley, they both concluded, Miss Fenton's heart was not engaged in the intended marriage, and consequently she was indifferent whether it took place or not.

Since the death of the late earl, that young lady had not been in town; nor had the present lord been near the spot where she resided since the week her lover died; of course, nothing like love could be declared at so early a period; and if it had been made known since, it must only have been by letter, or by the deputation of Mr. Sandford, whom they knew had once been in the country to visit her; but how little he was qualified to enforce a tender passion, was a comfortable reflection.

Revived with these conjectures, of which some were true, and others false; the very next day a dark gloom overspread their bright prospects, on Mr. Sandford's saying as he entered the breakfast-room,

"Miss Fenton, ladies, desired me to present her compliments to you."

"Is she in town?" asked Mrs. Horton.

"She came to town yesterday morning," returned Sandford, "and is at her brother's, in Ormond-street; my lord and I supped

supped there last night, and that made us so late home."

His lordship entered soon after, and confirmed what had been said, by bowing to his ward, and telling her, "Miss Fenton had charged him with her kindest respects."

"How does poor Miss Fenton look?" Mrs. Horton asked lord Elmwood.

To which question Sandford replied, "Beautiful—she looks beautifully."

"She has got over her uneasiness, I suppose then?" said Mrs. Horton—not knowing she was asking the question before her new lover.

"Uneasy!" replied Sandford, "uneasy at any trial this world can send? that had been highly unworthy of her."

"But sometimes women do fret at such things," replied Mrs. Horton innocently.

Lord Elmwood asked Miss Milner—"If she meant to ride, this charming day?"

While she was hesitating—

"There are very different kind of women," (answered Sandford, directing his discourse to Mrs. Horton,) "there is as much difference between some women, as between good and evil spirits."

Lord Elmwood asked Miss Milner again—if she took an airing?

She replied, "No."

"And beauty," continued Sandford, "when endowed upon spirits that are evil, is a mark of their greater, their more extreme wickedness.—Lucifer was the most beautiful of all the angels in paradise——"

"How do you know?" said Miss Milner.

"But the beauty of Lucifer" (continued Sandford, in perfect neglect and contempt of her question,) "was an aggravation of his guilt; because it shewed a double share of ingratitude to the Divine Creator of that beauty."

"Now you talk of angels," said Miss Milner, "I wish I had wings; and I should like to fly through the park this morning."

"You would be taken for an angel in good earnest," said Lord Elmwood.

Sandford was angry at this little compliment, and cried, "Then instead of the wings, I would advise the serpent's skin."

"My lord," cried she, does not Mr. Sandford use me ill?"—Vext with other things, she felt herself extremely hurt at this, and made the appeal almost in tears.

"Indeed, I think he does," answered his lordship, and he looked at Sandford as if he was displeased.

This

This was a triumph so agreeable to her, she immediately pardoned the offence; but the offender did not so easily pardon her.

“ Good morning, ladies,” said his lordship, rising to go away.

“ My lord,” said Miss Woodley, “ you promised Miss Milner to accompany her one evening to the opera; this is opera night.”

“ Will you go, my lord?” asked Miss Milner, in a voice so soft, he seemed as if he wished, but could not resist it.”

“ I am to dine at Mr. Fenton’s to-day,” he replied, “ and if he and his sister will go; and you will allow them part of your box, I will promise to come.”

This was a condition that did not please her, but as she felt a strong desire to see him in the company of his intended bride, (for she fancied she could perceive his most secret sentiments, could she once see them together) she answered not ungraciously, “ Yes, my compliments to Mr. and Miss Fenton, and I hope they will favour me with their company.”

Then, madam, if they come, you may expect me—else not.” And he bowed and left the room.

All the day was passed in anxious expectation by Miss Milner, what would be the event of the evening; for upon the skill of her penetration that evening, all her future prospects she thought depended.—If she saw by his looks, his words, or assiduity, he loved Miss Fenton, she flattered herself she would never think of him again with hope; but if she observed him treat her with inattention or indifference, she meant to cherish from that moment the fondest expectations.—Against that short evening her toilet was consulted the whole day; and the alternate hope and fear which fluttered at her heart, gave a more than usual brilliancy to her eyes, and more than usual bloom to her complexion.—But in vain was her beauty; vain all the pains she had taken to decorate that beauty; vain the many looks she cast towards her box-door to see it open; lord Elmwood did not come.

The music was discord—every thing she saw, was disgusting—in a word, she was miserable.

She longed impatiently for the curtain to drop, because she was uneasy where she was—yet she asked herself, “ Shall I be less unhappy

happy at home? yes, at home I shall see Lord Elmwood, and that will be happiness—but he will behold me with neglect, and that will be misery.—Ungrateful man! I will no longer think of him.” She said to herself.—Or could she have thought of him without joining in the same idea Miss Fenton, her anguish had been supportable; but while she pictured them as lovers, the tortures of the rack give but a few degrees more pain than she endured.

There are but few persons who ever felt the real passion of jealousy, because few have felt the real passion of love; but to those who have experienced them both, jealousy not only affects the mind, but every fibre of the frame is a victim to it; and Miss Milner’s every limb ached, with agonizing torment, while Miss Fenton, courted and beloved by Lord Elmwood, was present to her imagination.

The moment the opera was finished, she flew hastily down stairs, as if to fly from the sufferings she experienced.—She did not go into the coffee-room, though repeatedly persuaded by Miss Woodley, but waited at the door till her carriage drew up.

Piqued—heart-broken—full of resentment to the object of her uneasiness; as she stood inattentive to all that passed, a hand gently laid hold of her's, and the most humble and insinuating voice said, "Will you permit me to hand you to your carriage?" She was awaked from her reverie, and found Lord Frederick Lawnsby by her side.—Her heart, just then melting with tenderness to another, was perhaps more accessible than heretofore, or bursting with resentment, thought this the moment to retaliate. Whatever passion reigned that instant, it was favourable to the desires of Lord Frederick, and she looked as if she was glad to see him; he beheld this with the rapture and the humility of a lover; and though she did not feel the slightest love in return, she felt a gratitude proportionate to the insensibility with which she had been treated by her guardian, and Lord Frederick was not very erroneous if he mistook this gratitude for a latent spark of affection. The mistake, however, did not force from him his respect: he handed her to her carriage, bowed lowly and disappeared. Miss Woodley wished to divert her thoughts from the object which could
only

only make her wretched, and as they rode home, by many encomiums upon Lord Frederick, endeavoured to incite her to a regard for him; Miss Milner was displeased at the attempt, and exclaimed,

“What, love a rake, a man of professed gallantry? impossible.—To me, a common rake is as odious, as a common prostitute is to a man of the nicest feelings.—Where can be the pride of inspiring a passion, fifty others can equally inspire? or the transport of bestowing favours, where the appetite is already cloyed by fruition of the self-same enjoyments?”

“Strange,” cried Miss Woodley, “that you who possess so many follies incident to your sex, should, in the disposal of your heart, have sentiments so contrary to women in general.”

“My dear Miss Woodley,” returned she, “put in competition the languid love of a debauchee, with the vivid affection of a sober man, and judge which has the dominion? Oh! in my calendar of love, a solemn lord chief justice, or a devout archbishop, ranks before a licentious king.”

Miss Woodley smiled at an opinion which she knew half her sex would laugh

at ; but by the air of sincerity with which it was delivered, she was convinced, her late behaviour to lord Frederick was but the mere effect of chance.

Lord Elmwood's carriage drove to his door just at the time her's did ; Mr. Sandford was with him, and they were both come from passing the evening at Mr. Fenton's.

" So, my lord," said Miss Woodley, as soon as they met in the apartment, " you did not come to us."

" No," answered his lordship, " I was sorry ; but I hope you did not expect me."

" Not expect you, my lord ?" cried Miss Milner, " did not you say you would come ?"

" If I had, I certainly should have come," returned he, " but I only said so conditionally."

" That I am witness to," cried Sandford, " for I was present at the time, and his lordship said it should depend upon Miss Fenton."

" And she with her gloomy disposition," said Miss Milner, " chose to sit at home."

" Gloomy disposition ?" repeated Sandford, " She is a young lady with a great share

share of sprightliness—and I think I never saw her in better spirits than she was this evening, my lord?”

Lord Elmwood did not speak.

“ Bless me, Mr. Sandford,” cried Miss Milner, “ I meant no reflection upon Miss Fenton’s disposition ; I only meant to censure her taste for staying at home.”

“ I think,” replied Sandford, “ a much greater censure should be passed upon those, who prefer rambling abroad.”

“ But I hope, ladies, my not coming,” said his lordship, “ was no cause of inconvenience to you; you had still a gentleman with you, or I should certainly have come.”

“ Oh! yes, two gentlemen,” answered the young son of Lady Evans, a lad from school, whom Miss Milner had taken along with her, and to whom his lordship had alluded.

“ What two?” asked Lord Elmwood.

Neither Miss Milner or Miss Woodley answered.

“ You know, madam,” said young Evans, “ that handsome gentleman who handed you into your carriage, and you called my lord.”

“ Oh!

"Oh! he means Lord Frederick Lawnley," said Miss Milner carelessly, but a blush of shame spread over her face.

"And did he hand you to your coach?" Asked his lordship, earnestly.

"By mere accident, my lord," Miss Woodley replied, "for the crowd was so great——"

"I think, my lord," said Sandford, "it was very lucky you were *not* there."

"Had Lord Elmwood been with us, we should not have had occasion for the assistance of any other." Said Miss Milner.

"Lord Elmwood has been with you, madam," returned Sandford, "very frequently, and yet——"

"Mr. Sandford," said his lordship, interrupting him, "it is near bed-time, your conversation keeps the ladies from retiring."

"Your lordship's does not," said Miss Milner, "for you say nothing."

"Because, madam, I am afraid to offend."

"But does not your lordship also hope to please? and without risking the one, it is impossible to arrive at the other."

"I think,

"I think, at present, the risk of one would be too hazardous, and so I wish you a good night." And he went out of the room somewhat abruptly.

"Lord Elmwood," said Miss Milner, "is very grave—he does not look like a man who has been passing his evening with the woman he loves."

"Perhaps he is melancholy at parting from her," said Miss Woodley.

"More likely offended," said Sandford, "at the manner in which that lady has spoken of her."

"Who, I?" cried Miss Milner, "I protest I said nothing but——"

"Nothing, madam? did not you say she was gloomy?"

"But, what I thought—I was going to add, Mr. Sandford."

"When you think unjustly, you should not express your thoughts."

"Then, perhaps, I should never speak."

"And it were better you did not, if what you say, is to give pain.—Do you know, madam, that my lord is going to be married to Miss Fenton?"

"Yes," answered Miss Milner.

"Do you know that he loves her?"

"No."

"No;" answered Miss Milner.

"How, madam! do you suppose he does not?"

"I suppose he does, yet I don't know it."

"Then supposing he does, how can you have the imprudence to find fault with her before him?"

"I did not—to call her gloomy, was, I knew, to praise her both to him and to you, who admire such tempers."

"Whatever her temper is, *every one* admires it; and so far from its being what you have described, she has a great deal of vivacity; vivacity which proceeds from the heart."

"No, if it proceeded, I should admire it too; but it rests there, and no one is the better for it."

"Come, Miss Milner," said Miss Woodley, "it is time to retire; you and Mr. Sandford must finish your dispute in the morning."

"Dispute, madam!" said Sandford, "I never disputed with any one beneath a doctor of divinity in my life.—I was only cautioning your friend not to make light of virtues, which it would do her honour to possess.—

possess.—Miss Fenton is a most amiable young woman, and worthy just such a husband as my Lord Elmwood will make her.”

“I am sure,” said Miss Woodley, “Miss Milner thinks so—she has a high opinion of Miss Fenton—she was at present only jesting.”

“But, madam, jests are very pernicious things, when delivered with a malignant sneer.—I have known a jest destroy a lady’s reputation—I have known a jest give one person a distaste for another—I have known a jest break off a marriage”

“But I suppose there is no apprehension of that, in the present case?” said Miss Woodley—wishing he might answer in the affirmative.

“Not that I can foresee,” replied he.—“No, Heaven forbid; for I look upon them to be formed for each other—their dispositions, their pursuits, their inclinations the same.—Their passions for each other just the same—pure—white as snow.”

“And I dare say, not warmer,” replied Miss Milner.

He looked provoked beyond measure.

“Dear Miss Milner,” cried Miss Woodley, “how can you talk thus? I believe in
my

my heart you are only envious my lord did not offer himself to you."

"To her!" said Sandford, affecting an air of the utmost surprise, "to her? Do you think his lordship received a dispensation from his vows to become the husband of a coquette—a——" he was going on.

"Nay, Mr. Sandford," cried Miss Milner, "I believe my greatest crime in your eyes, is being a heretick."

"By no means, madam—it is the only circumstance that can apologize for your faults; and had you not that excuse, there would be none for you."

"Then, at present, there is an excuse—I thank you, Mr. Sandford; this is the kindest thing you ever said to me. But I am vext to see you are sorry, you have said it."

"Angry at your being a heretic?" he resumed, "Indeed I should be much more concerned to see you a disgrace to our religion."

Miss Milner had not been in a good humour during the whole evening—she had been provoked to the full extent of her patience several times; but this harsh sentence hurried her beyond all bounds, and she
arose

arose from her seat in the most violent agitation, and exclaimed, "What have I done to be treated thus?"

Though Mr. Sandford was not a man easily intimidated, he was on this occasion evidently alarmed; and stared about him with so strong an expression of surprise, that it partook in some degree of fear.—Miss Woodley clasped her friend in her arms, and cried with the tenderest affection and pity, "My dear Miss Milner, be composed."

Miss Milner sat down, and was so for a minute; but her dead silence was nearly as alarming to Sandford as her rage had been; and he did not perfectly recover himself till he saw a flood of tears pouring down her face; he then heaved a sigh of content that it had so ended, but in his heart resolved never to forget the ridiculous affright into which he had been put.—He stole out of the room without uttering a syllable—But as he never retired to rest before he had repeated a long form of evening prayers, so when he came to that part which supplicates "Grace for the wicked," he named Miss Milner's name, with the most fervent devotion.

CHAPTER XXII.

AMONG the many sleepless nights Miss Milner passed, the present was not one of them; it is true she had a weight of care upon her heart, even heavier than usual, but its burthen had overcome her strength; and wearied out with hopes, with fears, and at the end with disappointment and rage, she sunk into a profound slumber as soon as she was laid down—but the more forgetfulness had prevailed, the greater was the force of remembrance when she awoke—At first, so sound had her sleep been, she had a difficulty in calling to mind why she was unhappy; but that she was unhappy, she well recollected—and when the cause came to her memory, she would have slept again, but that was impossible.

Though her rest had been sound, it had not been refreshing; she was far from well, and sent word so as an apology for not being present at breakfast. Lord Elmwood looked concerned when the message was

was delivered; Mr. Sandford shook his head.

“Miss Milner’s health is not good.” said Mrs. Horton a few minutes after

Lord Elmwood laid down the newspaper to attend to her.

“To me there is something very extraordinary about her,” continued Mrs. Horton, finding she had caught his lordship’s attention.

“So there is to me,” added Sandford, with a sarcastick sneer.

“And so there is to me,” said Miss Woodley, with a most serious face, and heartfelt sigh.

Lord Elmwood gazed by turns at each, as each delivered their sentiments—and when they were all silent, he looked bewildered, not knowing what judgment to form from any of these sentences.

Soon after breakfast, Mr. Sandford withdrew to his own apartment; Mrs. Horton in a little time went to her’s, and Lord Elmwood and Miss Woodley were left alone.—His lordship immediately rose from his seat, and said,

“I think, Miss Woodley, Miss Milner was extremely to blame, though I did not choose

choose to tell her so before Mr. Sandford, in giving my Lord Frederick an opportunity of speaking to her; unless she means he shall renew his addresses."

"That, I am sure, my lord," replied Miss Woodley, "she does not mean—and I assure you, my lord, seriously, it was by mere accident she saw him yesterday evening; or permitted him to attend her to her carriage."

"I am glad to hear it;" he returned quickly; "for although I am not of a suspicious nature, yet in regard to her affection for him, I cannot but have my doubts."

"You need have none, my lord," replied Miss Woodley, with a smile of confidence.

"And yet you must own her behaviour has warranted them—has it not been in this particular incoherent, undefinable, unaccountable!"

"The behaviour of a person in love, no doubt," said Miss Woodley.

"Don't I say so?" replied he warmly, "And is not that a just reason for my suspicions?"

"But

“ But is there only one man in the world on whom these suspicions should fix ?” said Miss Woodley with the colour mounting into her face.

“ Not that I know of—not one more that I know of,” returned he, with astonishment at what she had insinuated, and yet with a perfect assurance she was in the wrong.

“ Perhaps I am mistaken,” replied she.

“ Nay, that is impossible too—” returned he with anxiety, “ You share her confidence ; you are perpetually with her ; and provided she did not confide in you, you must know, must be acquainted with her inclinations.”

“ I believe I am *perfectly* acquainted with them,” replied Miss Woodley, with a significance in her voice and manner which convinced him there was some secret to learn.

After a hesitation ;

“ It is far from me,” replied he, “ to wish to be entrusted with the private sentiments of those who desire to withhold them from me, much less would I take any unfair means of being informed of them—

to

to ask any more from you, I believe, would be unfair—yet I cannot but lament, that I am not as well informed as you are.—I wish to prove my friendship to Miss Milner, but she will not suffer me—and every step I take for her happiness, I take in the most perplexing uncertainty.”

Miss Woodley sighed, but did not speak.—He seemed to wait for her reply, but as she made none, he proceeded.

“If ever a breach of confidence could be tolerated, I certainly know no occasion that would so justly authorise such a measure as the present.—I am not only proper from my character, but from my circumstances to be relied upon—my interest, is so nearly connected with the interest, and my happiness with the happiness of my ward, that those principles as well as my honour, would protect her from every peril arising from my being trusted.”

“Oh! my lord,” cried Miss Woodley, with a most forcible accent, “*you* are the last person on earth, she would pardon me for intrusting.”

“Why so?” (said he warmly,) “But that is the way—the person who is our friend we misdoubt—where a common interest

terest is concerned, we are ashamed of drawing on a common danger—Afraid of advice, though that advice is to save us.—Miss Woodley, said he, (changing his voice with excess of earnestness) do you believe that I would do any thing to make Miss Milner happy?”

“Any thing in honour, my lord.”

“She can desire nothing farther,—” he replied in agitation—“Are her desires so unwarrantable I cannot grant them?”

Miss Woodley again did not speak—and he continued.

“Great as my friendship is, there are certain bounds to it; bounds, that shall save her in spite of herself.”—And he raised his voice.

“In the disposal of themselves,” resumed he, with a less vehement tone, “that great, that terrific disposal in marriage, (at which I have ever looked with affright and dismay) there is no accounting for the rashness of a woman’s choice, or sometimes for the depravity of her taste.—But in such a case, Miss Milner’s election of a husband shall not direct mine—if she does not know her own value, I do.—Independent of her fortune, she has beauty to captivate

tivate the heart of any man ; and with all her follies, she has a frankness in her manner, an unaffected wisdom in her thoughts, a vivacity in her conversation, and withal, a softness in her demeanour, that might alone engage the affections of a man of the nicest sentiments, and the strongest understanding.—I will not see all these qualities and accomplishments debased.—It is my office to protect her from the consequences of a degraded choice, and I wil.”

“ My lord, Miss Milner’s taste is not a depraved one ; it is but too much refined.”

“ What do you mean by that, Miss Woodley ? you talk mysteriously.—Is she not afraid I will thwart her inclinations ?”

“ She is sure you will, my lord.”

“ Then must not the person be unworthy of her ?”

Miss Woodley rose from her seat, the tears trickled down her cheeks, she clasped her hands, and every look, every gesture proved her alternate resolution, and irresolution of proceeding farther.—Lord Elmwood’s attention was arrested before, but now it was fixed in a degree, which her manner could only occasion.

“ My

“ My lord,” said she, with a tremulous voice, “ promise me, declare to me, swear to me, it shall ever remain a secret in your own breast, and I will reveal to you, on whom she has placed her affections.”

This solemn preparation made Lord Elmwood tremble ; and he ran over instantly in his mind all the persons he could recollect, in order to arrive at the knowledge by thought, quicker than by words.—It was in vain he tried, and he once more turned his enquiring eyes upon Miss Woodley.—He saw her silent and covered with confusion.—Again he searched his own thoughts, nor ineffectually as before.—At the first glance the object was presented, and he beheld *himself*.

The rapid emotion of varying passions, which immediately darted over his features, informed Miss Woodley her secret was discovered—she hid her face, while the tears that fell down to her bosom, confirmed him in the truth of his suggestion beyond what oaths could have done.—A short interval of silence followed, during which she suffered tortures for the manner in which he would next speak to her—two seconds gave her this reply.

“ For God’s sake take care what you are doing—you are destroying my prospects of futurity—you are making this world too dear to me.”

Her drooping head was then lifted up, and as she caught the eye of Dorriforth, she saw it beam expectation, amaze, joy, ardour, love.—Nay, there was a fire, a vehemence in the quick fascinating rays it sent forth, she never before had seen—it filled her with alarm—she wished him to love Miss Milner, but to love her with moderation.—Miss Woodley was too little versed in the subject to know, that, had been, not to love at all ; at least not to the extent of breaking through engagements, and all the various obstacles, that still militated against their union.

Lord Elmwood was sensible of the embarrassment his presence gave Miss Woodley, and understood the reproaches which she seemed to vent upon herself in silence.—To relieve her from both, he laid his hand with force upon his heart, and said, “ Do you believe me ?”

“ I do, my lord,” she answered, trembling.

“ I will

“ I will make no unjust use of what I know,” returned he, with firmness.

“ I believe you, my lord.”

“ But for what my passions now dictate,” continued he, “ I will not answer.—They are confused—they are triumphant at present.—I have never yet, however, been vanquished by them; and even upon this occasion, my reason shall combat to the last,—that shall fail me, before I do wrong.”

He was going to leave the room—she followed him, and cried—“ But my lord how shall I see again the unhappy object of my treachery ?”

“ See her,” replied he, “ as one to whom you meant no injury, and to whom you have done none.”

“ But she would account it such, my lord.”

“ We are not judges of what belongs to ourselves;”——he replied,—“ I am transported at the tidings you have revealed, and yet, perhaps, I had better never have heard them.”

Miss Woodley was going to say something farther, but as if incapable of attending to her, he hastened out of the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MISS Woodley stood for some time to consider which way she was to go.—The first person she met would enquire, why she had been weeping to that excess her eyes were scarce discernible? and if Miss Milner was to ask the question, in what words could she tell, or in what manner deny the truth?—To avoid her, was the first caution, and she took the only method; she had a hackney-coach ordered, rode several miles out of town, and returned to dinner with so little remains of her swollen eyes, that complaining of the head-ach was a sufficient excuse for them.

Miss Milner was enough recovered to be present at dinner, though she scarce tasted a morsel. Lord Elmwood did not dine at home, at which Miss Woodley rejoiced, but at which Mr. Sandford appeared highly disappointed.—He asked the servants, several times, what his lordship said when he went out? they replied, “ nothing more than that he should not be

be at home to dinner.”—“I can’t imagine where he dines?” said Sandford.—“Bless me, Mr. Sandford, can’t you guess?” (cried Mrs. Horton, who by this time was made acquainted with his intended marriage), “he dines with Miss Fenton to be sure.”—“No,” replied Sandford, “he is not there; I came from thence just now, and they had not seen him all day.”—Poor Miss Milner, on this put a mouthful into her mouth; for where we hope for nothing, we receive small indulgences with joy.

Notwithstanding the anxiety and trouble under which Miss Woodley had laboured all the morning, her heart for many weeks had not felt so light as it did this day at dinner—The confidence she reposed in the promises of Lord Elmwood—the firm reliance she had upon his delicacy and his justice—the unabated kindness with which her friend received her, while no one suspicious thought, she knew, had taken harbour in her bosom—and the conscious integrity of her own intentions, however she might be misled by her judgment, all conspired to comfort her with the hope, she had done nothing she ought to wish re-

called.—But although she felt thus tranquil, in respect to what she had divulged, yet she felt a great deal embarrassed with the dread of next seeing Lord Elmwood.

Miss Milner, not having spirits to go abroad, passed the evening at home—she read part of a new opera, played upon her guitar, mused, sighed, occasionally talked with Miss Woodley, and so passed the tedious hours till near ten, when Mrs. Horton asked Mr. Sandford to play a game at piquet, and on his excusing himself, Miss Milner offered in his stead, and was gladly accepted.—They had just begun to play when Lord Elmwood came into the room—Miss Milner's countenance immediately brightened, and although she was in a negligent morning dress, and looked paler than usual, she did not look less beautiful—Miss Woodley was leaning on the back of her chair to observe the game, and Mr. Sandford sat reading one of the Greek Fathers at the other side of the fire place. Lord Elmwood as he advanced to the table bowed, not having seen the ladies since morning, or Miss Milner that day; they returned his salute, and he was going up to Miss Milner, (seemingly to enquire of her

her

her health,) when Mr. Sandford, laying down his book, said,

“ My lord, where have you been all day ?”

“ I have been very busy,” replied his lordship, and walking from the card-table went up to him.

Miss Milner began to make mistakes, and play one card for another.

“ You have been at Mr. Fenton’s this evening, I suppose ?” said Sandford.

“ No, not at all to-day,” replied his lordship.

“ How came that about, my lord ?” cried Sandford.

Miss Milner played the ace of diamonds, instead of the king of hearts.

“ I shall call to-morrow,” answered his lordship, and going with a very ceremonious air up to Miss Milner, said, “ He hoped she was perfectly recovered.”

Mrs. Horton begged her “ To mind what she was about.”

“ She replied, “ I am much better, Sir.”

He then returned to Sandford again : but never, during all this time, did his

eye once encounter Miss Woodley's, and she, with equal care, avoided his.

Some cold dishes were now brought up for supper—Miss Milner lost deal, and the game ended.

As they were arranging themselves at the supper-table, “Do,” Miss Milner,” said Mrs. Horton, “have something warm for your supper? a chicken boiled? or something of that kind? you have eat nothing all day.”

With the feeling of humanity, and apparently no other sensation—but never did he feel philanthropy so forcibly—Lord Elmwood said, “Let me beg of you, Miss Milner, to have something provided for you.”

The earnestness and emphasis with which these few words were pronounced, were more flattering than the finest turned compliment had been; her gratitude was expressed by blushes, and by assuring his lordship she was now “so well as to be able to sup on what was before her.”—She spoke, however, and had not made the trial; for the moment she carried a piece to her lips, she laid it on her plate again, and turned paler, from the vain endeavour

endeavour to force her appetite. Lord Elmwood had ever been attentive to her, but now he watched her as he would a child; and when he saw by her struggles she could not eat, he took her plate from her; gave her something else; and all with care and watchfulness in his looks, as if he had been a tender-hearted boy; and she his darling bird, the loss of which, would embitter all the joy of his holidays.

This attention had something about it so tender, so officious, and yet so sincere, that it brought the tears into Miss Woodley's eyes, attracted the notice of Mr. Sandford, and the observation of Mrs. Horton, while the heart of Miss Milner overflowed with a gratitude that gave place to no sentiment, except her love.

To relieve that anxiety her guardian expressed, she endeavoured to appear cheerful, and that anxiety, at length, really made her so.—He now pressed her to take one glass of wine with such solicitude, he seemed to say a thousand things beside—Sandford still made his observations, and being unused to conceal his thoughts before the present company, he said, bluntly,

“ Miss Fenton was indisposed the other night, my lord, and yet you did not seem half so anxious about her health.”

Had Sandford laid all Lord Elmwood’s estate at Miss Milner’s feet, or presented her with that eternal bloom which adorns the face of a goddess, he would have done less to endear himself to her, than by that single sentence—she looked at him with the most benign countenance, and felt affliction that she had ever offended him.

“ Miss Fenton,” (Lord Elmwood replied) “ has a brother with her ; her health and happiness are in his care, Miss Milner’s are in mine.”

“ Mr. Sandford,” said Miss Milner, “ I am afraid I behaved very uncivilly to you last night ; will you accept of an atonement ?

“ No, madam,” returned he, “ I accept no expiation without amendment.”

“ Well then,” said she, smiling, “ suppose I promise never to offend you again, what then ?”

“ Why then, you’ll break your promise,” returned he, churlishly.

“ Do not promise,” said Lord Elmwood, “ for he means to provoke you to it.

In

In the like conversation the evening was passed, and Miss Milner retired to rest in far better spirits than the morning's prospect had given her to hope for. Miss Woodley too, had cause to be well pleased, but her pleasure was in a great measure eclipsed by the reflection, "there was such a person as Miss Fenton;" she could not but fear, that in doing Miss Milner a right, she had, perhaps done that lady a wrong—she wished she had been equally acquainted with her heart, as she was with Miss Milner's, and she would then have acted without injustice to either; but Miss Fenton had of late shunned their society, and even in their company she was of a temper too reserved to discover her mind; Miss Woodley was therefore obliged to act to the best of her judgment only, and leave all events to providence.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WITHIN a few days, in the house of Lord Elmwood, every thing, and every person

son wore a new face.—His lordship was the profest lover of Miss Milner—she, the happiest of human beings—Miss Woodley partaking in her joy—while Mr Sandford was lamenting with the deepest concern, that Miss Fenton had been supplanted; and what added most poignantly to his sorrow was, that she had been supplanted by Miss Milner.—Though a church-man, he bore his disappointment with the impatience of one of the laity; he could hardly speak to Lord Elmwood; he would not look at Miss Milner, and was displeased with every body.—It was his intention when he first became acquainted with Lord Elmwood's resolution, to quit his house; and as his lordship had, with the utmost degree of inflexibility, resisted all his good counsel and advice upon this subject, he resolved, in quitting him, never to be his adviser or counsellor again.—But, in preparing to leave his friend, his pupil, his patron, and yet him, who, upon most occasions, implicitly obeyed his will, the spiritual got the better of the temporal man, and he determined to stay, lest in totally abandoning him to the pursuit of his own passions, he might make his punishment even greater than

than his offence.—“My lord,” said he, “on the stormy sea, upon which you are embarked, though you will not shun the rocks your faithful pilot would point out, he will, nevertheless, sail in your company, and lament over your watery grave. The more you slight my advice, the more you want it, and till you command me to leave your house, as I suppose you will soon do, to oblige your lady) I will continue along with you.”

Lord Elmwood liked him sincerely, and was glad he took this resolution; yet, as soon as his lordship’s reason and affections had once told him, he ought to break with Miss Fenton, and marry his ward, he became so decidedly of that opinion, Sandford’s never had the most trivial weight upon the subject, nor would he flatter the supposed authority he possessed over him, by urging him to remain in his house a single day, contrary to his inclinations. Sandford beheld, with grief, his firmness, but finding it vain to contend, submitted—not, however, with a good grace.

Amidst all the persons affected by this change in Lord Elmwood’s marriage designs, Miss Fenton was, perhaps, the least
—she

—she would have been content to have married, she was content to live single—Mr. Sandford was the first who made overtures to her on the part of Lord Elmwood, and the first sent to ask her to dispense with the obligation—She received both these proposals with the same insipid smile of approbation, and the same cold indifference at the heart.

It was a perfect knowledge of this disposition in his intended wife, which had given to Lord Elmwood's thoughts, on matrimony, the prospect of dreary winter; but the sensibility of Miss Milner had now reversed that prospect to perpetual spring; or the dearer variety of spring, summer, and autumn.

It was a knowledge also of this torpor in Miss Fenton's nature, from which he formed the purpose of breaking with her; for lord Elmwood still retained enough of the priest's sanctity, to have yielded up his own happiness, and even that of his beloved ward, rather than have plunged one heart into affliction by his perfidy. This, before he offered his hand to Miss Milner, he was perfectly convinced would not be the case—even Miss Fenton, herself, assured

fured him, her thoughts were more inclined towards the joys of Heaven than earth; and as this circumstance would, she believed, induce her to retire to a convent, she thought it a happy, rather than an unhappy event.—Her brother, on whom her fortune devolved if she took this resolution, was exactly of her opinion.

Lost in the maze of happiness which surrounded her, Miss Milner oftentimes asked her heart, and her heart whispered like a flatterer, “Yes.” Are not my charms even more invincible than I ever believed them to be? Dorriforth, the grave, the sanctified, the anchorite Dorriforth, by their force is animated to all the ardour of the most impassioned lover—while the proud priest, the austere guardian, is humbled, if I but frown, into the veriest slave of love.—She then asked, “Why did I not keep him longer in suspense? he could not have loved me more, I believe; but my power over him might have been greater still.—I am the happiest of women in that affection he has proved to me, but I wonder whether it would exist under ill-treatment? if it would not, he does not love me as I wish to be loved—if
it

it would, my triumph, my felicity, would be enhanced."—These thoughts were mere phantoms of the brain, and never by system put into action; but repeatedly indulged, they were practised by casual occurrences; and the dear-bought experiment of being beloved in spite of her faults, (a glory proud women ever aspire to) was, at present, the ambition of Miss Milner.

Unthinking woman! she did not reflect, that to the searching eye of Lord Elmwood she had faults, with her every care to conceal or overcome them, sufficient to try all his love, and all his patience. But what female is not fond of experiments? to which, how few are there, that do not fall a sacrifice!

Perfectly secure of the affections of the man she loved, her declining health no longer threatened her; her declining spirits returned as before; and the suspicions of her guardian being now changed to the liberal confidence of a doating lover, she now again professed all her former follies, all her fashionable levities, and indulged them with less restraint than she had ever done.

For

For a while, blinded by his passion, Lord Elmwood encouraged and admired every new proof of her restored happiness; nor till sufferance had tempted her to proceed beyond her usual bounds, did he remonstrate.—But she, who as his ward, had been ever gentle, and (when he strenuously opposed) always obedient; he now found as a mistress, sometimes haughty; and to opposition, always insolent.—He was surprised, but the novelty pleased him.—And Miss Milner, whom he tenderly loved, could put on no change, or appear in any new character that did not, for the time she adopted it, seem to become her.

Among the many causes of complaint she gave him, want of œconomy in the disposal of her income was one.—Bills and drafts came upon him without number, while the account, on her part, of money expended, amounted but to articles of dress she sometimes never wore; toys that were out of fashion before they were paid for; and charities directed by the force of whim.—Another complaint was, as usual, extreme late hours, and often-times company he did not approve.

She

She was charmed to see his love struggling with his censure—his politeness with his anxiety—and by the light, frivolous, or resentful manner, in which she treated his admonitions, she triumphed in shewing to Miss Woodley, and, more especially to Mr. Sandford, how much she dared upon the strength of his affections.

Every thing in preparation for their marriage, which was to take place at Elmwood-House during the summer months, she resolved for the short time she had to remain in London, to let no occasion pass of tasting all those pleasures which were not likely ever to return; but which, eager as she was in their pursuit, she still placed in no kind of competition with those she hoped would succeed; those more sedate, and far greater joys she had in domestic contemplation—and often, merely to hasten on the tedious hours that intervened, she varied and diverted them with the many recreations her intended husband could not approve.

It so happened, and it was unfortunate it did, that a law-suit and some other intricate affairs that came with his title and estate, frequently kept Lord Elmwood from his house part of the day; sometimes the whole

whole evening; and when at home, would often closet him for hours with his lawyers.—But while he was thus off his guard, Sandford never was—and had Miss Milner been the dearest thing on earth to him, he could not have watched her more narrowly; or had she been the frailest thing on earth, he could not have been more hard upon her, in all the accounts of her conduct he gave to Lord Elmwood.—His lordship knew Sandford's failing was to think ill of Miss Milner, he pitied him for it, and he pitied her for it—and all the aggravation his representations gave to her real follies, affection for them both, in the heart of Dorriforth, stood between every other impression.

But facts are glaring; and he at length beheld those faults in their true colours, although previously pointed out by the prejudice of Mr. Sandford.

As soon as Sandford perceived his lordship's uneasiness, “There, my lord!” cried he, exultingly, “Did not I always say the marriage was an improper one?—but you would not be ruled—you would not see.”

“Can you blame me for not seeing,” replied his lordship, “when you yourself
were

were blind?—Had you been dispassionate, had you seen Miss Milner's virtue as well as her faults, I should have believed, and been guided by you—but you saw her failings only, and therein have been equally deceived with me, who have only beheld her perfections."

"My observations, however, my lord, would have been of most use to you; for I have seen what to avoid."

"But mine have been the most charitable," replied his lordship, "for I have seen—what I must always love."

Sandford sighed, and lifted up his hands.

Mr. Sandford," resumed his lordship, with a voice and manner such as he puts on when not all the power of Sandford, or any other, can change his fixed determination, "Mr. Sandford," resumed he, "my eyes are now open to every failing, as well as to every accomplishment; to every vice, as well as to every virtue of Miss Milner's; nor will I suffer myself to be again prepossessed in her favour by your prejudice against her—for I believe it was compassion at your unkind treatment of her, that first gained her my heart."

"I, my

"I, my lord?" cried Sandford, "Do not load me with the burthen—with the mighty burthen of your love for her."

"Do not interrupt me," said his lordship; "Whatever your meaning has been, the effect of your unkindness to her, is what I say,—Now, I will no longer," continued he, "have an enemy such as you have been to heighten her charms, which are too transcendent in their native state, I will hear no more complaints against her, but I will watch her closely myself—and if I find her mind and heart (such as my suspicions have of late whispered) too frivolous for that substantial happiness I look for with an object so beloved; depend upon my word—the marriage shall yet be broken off."

"I depend upon your word; it *will* then," replied Sandford, eagerly.

"You are unjust, Sir, in saying so before the trial," replied his lordship, "and your injustice shall make me more cautious, lest I follow your example."

"But, my lord——"

"My mind is made up, Mr. Sandford," returned he, interrupting him, "I am no longer engaged to Miss Milner than she shall

shall deserve I should—but in my observations I will take care not to wrong her as you have done.

“ My lord, call my observations wrong, when you have reflected upon them as a man, and not as a lover—divest yourself of your passion, and meet me upon equal ground.”

“ I will meet no one—I will consult no one—my own judgment shall be the judge, and in a few months marry, or—*banish me from her for ever.*”

There was something in these last words, in the tone and firmness with which they were delivered, that the heart of Sandford rested upon with content—they bore the symptoms of a menace that would be executed ; and he parted from his patron with congratulations upon his wisdom, and the warmest assurances of his firm reliance on his *word*.

Lord Elmwood having come to this resolution, was more composed than he had been for several days before ; while the horror of domestick wrangles—a family without subordination—a house without œconomy—in a word, a wife without discretion,

erecton, had been perpetually present to his mind.

Mr. Sandford, although he was a man of understanding, of learning, and a complete casuist; yet, all the faults he himself committed, were entirely—for want of knowing better. He constantly reprov'd faults in others, and he was most assuredly too good a man not to have corrected and amended his own, had they been known to him—but they were not.—He had been for so long a time the superior of all with whom he lived, had been so busied with instructing others, he had not recollected he himself wanted instructions—and in such awe did his severity keep all about him, that notwithstanding he had many friends, not one told him of his failings—(except just now Lord Elmwood, but who, in this instance, as a man in love, he would not credit)—Was there not then some reason for him to suppose he had no faults?—his enemies, indeed, hinted, that he had, but enemies he never hearkened to; and thus, with all his good sense, wanted the sense to follow the rule, *Believe what your enemies say of you, rather than what is said by your friends*; this rule attended

attended to, would make many a one amiable that is now the reverse, and had made him, a perfect upright character.—For could an enemy, to whom he would have listened, whisper to Sandford as he left Lord Elmwood's study, “Cruel, barbarous man! you go away with your heart satisfied, nay, even elated in the prospect, that Miss Milner's hopes, on which she alone exists; those hopes which keep her from the deepest affliction, and cherish her with joy and gladness, will all be disappointed—you flatter yourself it is for the sake of your friend Lord Elmwood you rejoice; because he has escaped a danger—you wish him well, but there is another cause for your exultation which you will not seek to know—it is, that in his safety shall dwell the punishment of his ward.—for shame! for shame! forgive her faults, as this of your's needs forgiveness.”

Had any one said this, to Sandford, whom he would have credited; or had his own heart suggested it, he was a man of that rectitude and conscientiousness, he would have returned immediately to Lord Elmwood, and have endeavoured to strengthen all his favourable opinions of his
his

of his intended wife—but having no such monitor as this, he walked on, highly contented, and meeting Miss Woodley, said, with an air of triumph,

“Where’s your young lady?—where’s Lady Elmwood?”

Miss Woodley smiled, and answered—she was gone with such and such ladies to an auction.—“But why give her that title already, Mr. Sandford?”

“Because,” answered he, “I think she will never have it.”

“Bless me, Mr. Sandford!” said Miss Woodley, you shock me!”

“I thought I should,” replied he, “and that is why I tell it you.”

“For Heaven’s sake, what has happened?” cried she.

“Nothing new—her indiscretions only.”

“I know she is imprudent,” said Miss Woodley; “I can see she is often to blame—but then my lord surely loves her, and love will overlook a great deal.”

“He does love her—but he has understanding and resolution.—He loved his sister too, tenderly loved her, and yet when he had taken the resolution; passed

his word he would never see her again ; even upon her death-bed he would not retract it—no entreaties could prevail upon him.—And now, though he maintains, and I dare say loves her child, yet you remember when you brought him home he would not bear him in his sight.”

“ Poor Miss Milner !—said Miss Woodley in the most pitying accents.

“ Nay,” said Sandford, “ Lord Elmwood has not yet passed his word, that he will never see her more—he has only threatened to say so—but I know enough of him to know, his threats are generally the same as the actions done.”

“ You are very good,” said Miss Woodley, “ to acquaint me of this in time : I may now warn Miss Milner of it, and she may behave with more circumspection.”

“ By no means,”—cried Sandford, hastily, “ What would you warn her for ?—it will do her no good—besides,” added he, “ I don’t know whether his lordship does not expect secrecy from me on this subject, and if he does——”

“ But, with all deference to your opinion,” said Miss Woodley, (and with all deference did she speak) “ don’t you think,

Mr.

Mr. Sandford, that secrecy upon this occasion would be wicked? for consider the anguish it may cause my friend, and if by advising her we can save her from——” She was going on.

“ You may call it wicked, madam, not to inform her of it,” cried he, but I call a breach of promise (if I did give my promise, which I don’t say I did) much more sinful.”

“ I suppose you are right; Sir,” said Miss Woodley, with humility; “ but if you have given *your* promise, I have not given mine, and therefore may divulge—

“ There now!” cried Sandford, “ there is how you judge of this matter.—You judge of things as they are in reality, not what they are by construction; the only way to judge of any thing.—If I did make a promise to Lord Elmwood—(which, I again say, I don’t know that I did)—the promise was, that I would not communicate the secret; meaning, not tell it to Miss Milner herself.—I have not; and therefore have kept my word—and in revealing it to you, I did it with a full persuasion you would conceal it; which confidence, on my part, binds you as much

as the most solemn promise, you could have given."

"The fault will be mine, then, not yours, if it comes to the knowledge of Miss Milner?"

"Certainly."

"Then, as it will be my fault, do not you, Sir, be uneasy about it."—

He was going to explain again, but Miss Milner entered, and put an end to the discourse.—She had been passing the whole morning at an auction, and had laid out near two hundred pounds in different things she had no one use for; but bought them because they were said to be cheap.—Among the rest was a lot of books on chemistry, and some Latin authors.

"Why, madam," cried Sandford, looking over the catalogue, where her purchases were marked by a pencil, "do you know what you have done? you can't read a word of these books."

"Can't I, Mr. Sandford? but I assure you, you will be vastly pleased with them when you see how elegantly they are bound."

"My dear," said Mrs. Horton, "why have you bought china? you and Lord Elmwood

Elmwood have more now, than you have places to put them in."

"Very true, Mrs. Horton—I forgot that—but then you know I can give these away."

Lord Elmwood was in the room at the conclusion of this conversation——he shook his head and sighed.

"My lord," said she, "I have had a very pleasant morning, but I wished for you—if you had been with me I should have bought a great many other things; but I did not like to appear unreasonable in your absence."

"Sandford fixed his inquisitive eyes upon Lord Elmwood, to observe his countenance—his lordship smiled, but appeared thoughtful.

"And, oh! my lord, I have bought you a present," said she.

"I do not wish for a present, Miss Milner."

"What, not from me?—very well."

"If you present me with yourself, madam, it is all I ask."

Sandford moved upon his chair as if he sat uneasy.

Why then, Miss Woodley," said Miss Milner, "*you* shall have the present.—But

then it won't suit you—it is for a gentleman.—I'll keep it and give it to my Lord Frederick the first time I meet with him.—I saw him this morning, and he looked divinely; I longed to speak to him.”

Miss Woodley cast, by stealth, an eye of apprehension upon Lord Elmwood's face, and trembled to behold it as red as scarlet.

Sandford stared with both his eyes full upon him; then drew himself upright on his chair, and took a pinch of snuff upon the strength of his uneasiness.

A silence ensued.

After a short time—“You all appear very melancholy,” said Miss Milner; “I wish I had not come home yet.”

Miss Woodley was in agony—she saw Lord Elmwood's extreme displeasure, and dreaded lest he should express it by some words he could not recall, or she could not forgive—therefore, whispering to her she had something particular to say to her, she took her out of the room.

The moment she was gone, Mr. Sandford rose nimbly from his seat, rubbed his hands, walked briskly across the room,
then

then asked his lordship, in a cheerful tone, "Whether he dined at home to-day?"

That which had given Sandford spirits to speak with cheerfulness, had depressed Lord Elmwood's so much, that he sat silent and dejected.—At length he answered, in a faint voice, "No, I believe I shall *not* dine at home."

"Where is your lordship going to dine?" asked Mrs. Horton; "I thought we should have had your company to-day; Miss Milner dines at home, I believe."

"I have not yet determined where I shall dine," replied he, taking no notice of the conclusion of her speech.

"My lord, if you mean to go to the hotel, I'll go with you, if you please." Cried Sandford, officiously.

"With, all my heart, Sandford," replied his lordship; and they both went out together before Miss Milner returned to the apartment.

CHAPTER XXV.

MISS Woodley, for the first time, disobeyed the will of Mr. Sandford; and as soon as Miss Milner and she were alone, informed her of all he had revealed to her; accompanying the recital with every testimony of sympathy and affection.—But had the genius of Sandford presided over this discovery, it could not have influenced the mind of Miss Milner to receive the intelligence, more exactly opposite to the intention of the informer. Instead of shuddering with fear at the menace Lord Elmwood had uttered, she boldly said, she “Dared him to perform it.” “He durst not,” repeated she.

“Why durst not?” Said Miss Woodley.

“Because he loves me too well—because his own happiness is too dear to him.”

“I believe he loves you,” replied Miss Woodley, “and yet there is a doubt if——”

“There shall be no longer a doubt,”—cried Miss Milner, “I’ll put him to the proof.”

“For

“ For shame, my dear ! you talk inconsiderately—what do you mean by proof ? ”

“ I mean, I will do something that any prudent man ought *not* to forgive ; and yet, with that vast share of prudence he possesses, I will force him still to yield to his love.”

“ But suppose you should be disappointed, and he should not yield ? ” said Miss Woodley.

“ Then, I have only lost a man who had no regard for me.”

“ He may have a great regard for you, notwithstanding.”

But for the love I have, and do still bear my Lord Elmwood, I will have something more than a *great regard* in return.”

“ You have his love, I am sure.”

“ But is it such as mine ?—*I could love him* if he had a thousand faults.—And yet,” said she, recollecting herself, “ and yet, I believe, his being faultless, was the first cause of my passion.”

Thus she talked on—sometimes in anger, sometimes apparently jesting—till her servant came to tell her dinner was served. Upon entering the diningroom, and see-

ing his lordship's place at table vacant, she started back. She was disappointed of the pleasure she expected in dining with him; and his sudden absence so immediately after the intelligence she had received from Miss Woodley, encreased her uneasiness. —She drew her chair, and sat down with an indifference, that said she should not eat; and as soon as she was seated, she put her fingers sullenly to her lips, nor touched her knife and fork, or spoke a word in reply to any thing that was said to her during the whole dinner.—Miss Woodley and Mrs. Horton were both too well acquainted with the good disposition of her heart, to take offence, or any notice of this behaviour.—They dined, and wisely said nothing either to provoke or soothe her.—Just as the dinner was going to be removed, a loud rap came at the door—“Who is that?” said Mrs. Horton.—One of the servants went to the window, and answered, “My lord and Mr. Sandford, madam.”—“Come back to dinner, as I live.” Cried Mrs. Horton.—

Miss Milner still continued her position and said nothing—but at the corners of her mouth, which her fingers did not entirely

tirely cover, there were discoverable a thousand dimpled graces like small convulsive fibres, which a restrained smile on lord Elmwood's return, had sent there.

His lordship and Sandford entered.

"I am glad you are returned, my lord," said Mrs. Horton, "for Miss Milner would not eat a morsel."

"It was because I had no appetite," returned she, blushing like crimson.

"We should not have come back," said Sandford, "but at the place where we went to dine, all the rooms were filled with smoke."

"It has been a very windy day indeed," said Mrs. Horton, "and one part of this house, is now in a smother."

Lord Elmwood put the wing of a fowl on Miss Milner's plate, but without previously asking if she chose any; yet she condescended to eat—they spoke to each other too in the course of conversation, yet it was with a reserve that appeared as if they had been quarrelling, and so felt to themselves, though no such circumstance had happened.

About two weeks passed away in this kind of distant behaviour on both sides;
without

without either venturing a direct quarrel, and without either expressing (except inadvertently) their strong affection for each other.

During this time they were once, however, nearly becoming the dearest friends in expressions, as well as in sentiments.— This arose from a favour he granted in compliance to what he knew was her earnest desire; and, as a favour which he had refused to the repeated requests of many friends, she could not but esteem the high value of the obligation.

She and Miss Woodley had taken an airing to see the poor child, young Rushbrook; and on their return, his lordship inquiring of the ladies how they had passed their morning, Miss Milner frankly told him; and added, “What pain it gave her to leave the child behind, as he still cried to come away with her.”

“Go for him then to-morrow,” said his lordship, “and bring him home.”

“Home!” she repeated with surprise.

“Yes,” replied he, “if you desire it, this shall be his home—you shall be a mother, and I will, henceforward, be a father to him.”

Sand-

Sandford, who was present, looked unusually sour at this high token of his lordship's regard to Miss Milner; yet, with resentment on his face, he wiped a tear of joy from his eye, for the boy's sake—his frown was the force of prejudice, his tear the force of nature.

Rushbrook was brought home; and whenever Lord Elmwood wished to shew a kindness to Miss Milner, without directing it immediately to her, he took his nephew upon his knee, talked to him, and told him, "He was glad they had become acquainted."

In the various, though delicate, struggles for power between Miss Milner and her guardian, there was not one person witness to these incidents, who did not suppose, all would at last end in wedlock—for the most common observer perceived, ardent love was the foundation of every discontent, as well, as of every joy they experienced.—One great incident, however, totally reversed the prospect of all future accommodation.

The fashionable Mrs. G—— gave a masked ball; tickets were presented to persons of the first quality, and among the rest

rest, three were sent to Miss Milner.—She had never been at a masquerade, and received them with extacy—more especially as the mask being at the house of a woman of fashion, she did not conceive there could be any objection to her going.—She was mistaken—the moment she mentioned it to Lord Elmwood, he desired her, somewhat sternly, “Not to think of being there.”—She was vexed at the prohibition, but more at the manner in which it was delivered, and flatly said, “She should certainly go.”

She expected a severe rebuke for this, but what alarmed her much more, he never replied a word; but looked with a resignation which foreboded her more sorrow, than the severest reproaches would have done.—She sat for a minute reflecting how to rouse him from this composure—the first thought of attacking him with upbraidings; then she thought of soothing him; and at last of laughing at him.—This was the least supportable of all, and yet this she ventured upon.

“I am sure your lordship,” said she, “with all your faintness, can have no objection to my being present at the masquerade, provided I go as a Nun.”

He

He made no reply.

“That is a habit,” continued she, “which covers a multitude of faults—and, for that evening, I may have the chance of making a conquest even of you, my lord—nay, I question not, if under that inviting attire, even the pious Mr. Sandford would not ogle me.”

“Hush,”—said Miss Woodley.

“Why hush?” cried Miss Milner, aloud, though Miss Woodley had spoken in a whisper, “I am sure,” continued she, “I am only repeating what I have read in books about nuns, and their confessors.”

“Your conduct, Miss Milner,” replied Lord Elmwood, gives evident proofs what authors you have read; you may spare yourself the trouble of quoting them.”

Her pride was hurt at this, beyond bearing; and as she could not, like him, govern her anger, it flushed in her face, and almost forced the tears.

“My lord,” said Miss Woodley, (in a voice so soft and peaceful, it ought to have calmed the resentment of both,) “my lord, suppose you were to accompany Miss Milner? there are tickets for three, and you can then have no objection.”

Miss

rest, three were sent to Miss Milner.—She had never been at a masquerade, and received them with extacy—more especially as the mask being at the house of a woman of fashion, she did not conceive there could be any objection to her going.—She was mistaken—the moment she mentioned it to Lord Elmwood, he desired her, somewhat sternly, “Not to think of being there.”—She was vexed at the prohibition, but more at the manner in which it was delivered, and flatly said, “She should certainly go.”

She expected a severe rebuke for this, but what alarmed her much more, he never replied a word; but looked with a resignation which foreboded her more sorrow, than the severest reproaches would have done.—She sat for a minute reflecting how to rouse him from this composure—the first thought of attacking him with upbraidings; then she thought of soothing him; and at last of laughing at him.—This was the least supportable of all, and yet this she ventured upon.

“I am sure your lordship,” said she, “with all your faintness, can have no objection to my being present at the masquerade, provided I go as a Nun.”

He

He made no reply.

“That is a habit,” continued she, “which covers a multitude of faults—and, for that evening, I may have the chance of making a conquest even of you, my lord—nay, I question not, if under that inviting attire, even the pious Mr. Sandford would not ogle me.”

“Hush,”—said Miss Woodley.

“Why hush?” cried Miss Milner, aloud, though Miss Woodley had spoken in a whisper, “I am sure,” continued she, “I am only repeating what I have read in books about nuns, and their confessors.”

“Your conduct, Miss Milner,” replied Lord Elmwood, gives evident proofs what authors you have read; you may spare yourself the trouble of quoting them.”

Her pride was hurt at this, beyond bearing; and as she could not, like him, govern her anger, it flushed in her face, and almost forced the tears.

“My lord,” said Miss Woodley, (in a voice so soft and peaceful, it ought to have calmed the resentment of both,) “my lord, suppose you were to accompany Miss Milner? there are tickets for three, and you can then have no objection.”

Miss

Miss Milner's brow was immediately smoothed; her eye beamed hope; and she fetched a sigh in anxious expectation he would consent.

"I go, Miss Woodley?" he replied, with astonishment, "Do you imagine I would play the buffoon at a masquerade?"

Miss Milner's face changed to its former state.

"I have seen many grave characters, my lord," said Miss Woodley.

"Dear Miss Woodley," cried Miss Milner, "why persuade Lord Elmwood to put on a mask, just at the time he has laid it aside?"

His patience seemed now to be tempted to its height, and he answered, "If you suspect it, madam, you shall find me changed."

Pleased, she had been able at last to irritate him, she smiled with a degree of triumph, and in that humour was going to reply; but before she thought of it, he abruptly left the room.

She was highly offended at this insult, and declared, "From that moment she banished him her heart for ever." And to prove she set both his love and anger at defiance,

fiance, she immediately ordered her chariot, and said, she “ was going to some of her acquaintance, whom she knew had tickets, and with whom she would fix upon the dress she meant to appear in at the masquerade; for nothing, unless she was locked up, should alter the resolution she had taken, of being there.” To remonstrate at that moment, Miss Woodley knew would be in vain; the chariot came to the door, and she drove away.

She did not return to dinner, nor till late in the evening; Lord Elmwood was at home, but never once mentioned her name.

She came home, after he had retired to bed, and in great spirits; the first time she ever appeared careless what he might think of her behaviour:—but her whole thoughts were occupied upon the business she had been about, and her dress engrossed all her conversation as soon as Miss Woodley and she were alone.—She told Miss Woodley, she had been shewn the greatest variety of beautiful and becoming dresses she had ever beheld, and yet, said she, “ I have fixed upon a very plain one; but one I look so well

well in, you will hardly know me when I have it on."

"You are seriously then resolved to go," said Miss Woodley, "provided you hear no more on the subject from your guardian?"

"Whether I do or not, Miss Woodley, I am equally resolved to go."

"But you know, my dear, he has desired you not—and you used always to obey his commands."

"As my guardian, I certainly did obey him; and I could obey him as a husband; but as a lover, I will not."

"Yet that is the means never to have him for a husband."

"As he pleases—for if he will not submit to be my lover, I will not submit to be his wife—nor has he the affection I require in a husband."

Thus, the old sentiments were repeated as heretofore, and prevented a separation till towards morning.

Miss Milner, for that night, dreamt less of her guardian than of the masquerade. On the evening of the next day it was to be; she was up early, breakfasted in her dressing-room, and remained there most of the day, busied in all the thousand preparations

rations for the night; one of which, was to take every particle of powder out of her hair, and have it curled all over in falling ringlets.—Her next care was, that her dress should exactly fit, and display her fine person to the best advantage—it did so.—Miss Woodley entered as it was trying on, and was struck with astonishment at the elegance of the habit, and the beautiful effect it had upon her graceful person; but most of all, she was astonished at her venturing on such a character—for although it was the representative of the goddess of Chastity, yet from the buskins, and the petticoat made to festoon far above the ankle, it had, on the first glance, the appearance of a female much less virtuous.—Miss Woodley admired the dress; yet objected to it; but as she admired at first, her objections after had no weight.

“Where is Lord Elmwood?” said Miss Milner, “he must not see me.”

“No, for heaven’s sake,” cried Miss Woodley, “I would not have him see you for the universe.”

“And yet,” returned the other, with a sigh, “why am I then thus pleased with this

this dress? for I should rather he should admire me than all the world beside, and yet he is not to see me in it."

"But he would not admire you thus," said Miss Woodley.

"You had better dress at the ladies' house with whom you go," said Miss Woodley; and this was agreed upon.

At dinner they learnt, his lordship was to go that evening to Windsor, in order to be in readiness for the king's hunt, early in the morning; and this intelligence having dispersed Miss Milner's fears, she concluded to dress at home."

Lord Elmwood appeared at dinner in an even, but not in a good temper;—the subject of the masquerade was never brought up, or indeed was once in his thoughts; for though he was offended at his ward's behaviour on the occasion, and thought she committed a fault in telling him, "She would go," yet he never suspected she meant to do so, not even at the time she said it, much less that she would persist, coolly and deliberately, in so direct a contradiction to his will.—She, for her part, flattered herself his going to Windsor, was intended in order to give her an
oppor-

opportunity of passing the evening as she pleased, without his being obliged to know of it, and consequently to complain.—Miss Woodley, who was willing to hope as she wished, began to be of the same opinion; and, without reluctance, dressed herself as a wood-nymph, to accompany her friend.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AT half after eleven, Miss Milner's chair, and another with Miss Woodley, took them from Lord Elmwood's house to call upon the party (a group of wood-nymphs and huntresses) which were to accompany them, and make up the suit of Diana.

They had not left the house two minutes when a thundering rap came at the door—it was Lord Elmwood in a post-chaise.—Upon some occasion the next day's hunt was put off: he had been made acquainted with it, and came from Windsor at that late hour.—After his lordship had told Mrs. Horton
and

and Mr. Sandford, who were sitting together, the cause of his sudden return, and some supper was ordered for him, he enquired, "What company had just left the house?"

"We have been alone the whole evening, my lord," replied Mrs. Horton.

"Nay," returned he, "I saw two chairs, with several servants, come out of the door as I drove up; but what livery I could not discern."

"We have had no creature here," repeated Mrs. Horton.

"Nor has Miss Milner?" asked he.

This brought Mrs. Horton to her recollection, and she cried, "Oh! now I know."——And then checked herself, as if she knew too much.

"What do you know, madam?" said his lordship, sharply.

"Nothing,"—said Mrs. Horton, "I know nothing." And she lifted up her hands and shook her head.

"So all people say, who know a great deal," cried Sandford, "and I suspect, that is at present your case."

"Then I know more than I wish to know, I am sure, Mr. Sandford," returned she

she shrugging up her shoulders.

Lord Elmwood was all impatience. "Explain, madam, explain," cried he.

"Dear my lord," said she, "if your lordship will recollect, you may just have the same knowledge that I have."

"Recollect what?" said he, sternly.

"The quarrel you and your ward had about the masquerade."

"What of that? she is not gone there?" he cried.

"I am not sure she is," returned Mrs. Horton, "but if your lordship saw two sedan chairs going out of his house, I cannot but suspect it must be Miss Milner, and my niece, going to the masquerade."

His lordship made no answer, but rung the bell violently.—A servant entered.—"Send Miss Milner's woman hither," said he, "immediately."—The man withdrew.

"Nay, my lord," cried Mrs. Horton, "any of the other servants could tell you just as well, whether Miss Milner is at home, or gone out."

"Perhaps not," replied he.

The maid entered.

"Where is your lady?" said he.

The woman had received no orders to
con-

conceal where her lady was gone, and yet some secret influence which governs the replies of all waiting women and chambermaids, whispered to her, she ought not to tell the truth.

“Where is your lady?” repeated Lord Elmwood, in a louder voice than before.

“Gone out, my lord,” she replied.

“Where?”

“My lady did not tell me.”

“And don’t you know?”

“No, my lord,” she answered, and without blushing.

“Is this the night of the masquerade?” said he.

“I don’t know, my lord, upon my word; but, I believe, my lord, it is not.”

Sandford, as soon as Lord Elmwood had asked the last question, run hastily to the table, at the other side of the room, snatched something from it, and returned to his place again—and as soon as the maid said, “It was not the night of the masquerade,” he exclaimed, “But it is, my lord, it is—yes, it is.” And showing a news-paper he held in his hand, pointed to the paragraph which contained the information.

“Leave the room,” said Lord Elmwood
to

to the woman, "I have done with you."—She withdrew.

"Yes, yes, here it is," repeated Sandford, with the paper in his hand.—He then read the paragraph: "*The masquerade at the honourable Mrs- G——'s this evening—*" "This evening, my lord, you find;" "*it is expected will be the most brilliant, of any thing of the kind, for these many years past.*"

"They should not put such things in the papers," said Mrs. Horton, "to tempt young women to their ruin." The word ruin, seemed to grate upon his lordship's ear, and he said to the servant, who came to wait on him, while he supped, "Take the supper away."—He had not attempted to eat, or even sit down; and he now walked backwards and forwards in the room, lost in thought and care.

A little time after, one of Miss Milner's footmen came in upon some occasion, and Mr. Sandford said to him, "Pray did you attend your lady to the masquerade?"

Yes, Sir," replied the man.

Lord Elmwood stopt himself short in his walk, and said to the servant, "You did?"

"Yes, my lord," replied he.

His lordship walked again.

"I should like to know what she was drest in," said Mrs. Horton; and turning to the servant, "Do you know what your lady had on?"

"Yes, madam," replied the man, "she was in mens cloaths."

"How?" cried Lord Elmwood.

"You tell a story to be sure," said Mrs. Horton to the servant,

"No," cried Sandford, "I am sure he does not; for he is an honest good young man, and would not tell a lie upon any account,—would you?"

Lord Elmwood ordered Miss Milner's woman to be again sent up.—She came.

"In what dress did your lady go to the masquerade?" Asked his lordship, and with a look so extremely morose, it seemed to command her to answer in a word, and to answer truly.

A mind, with a spark of sensibility more than she possessed, could not have equivocated with such an interrogator, but her reply was, "She went in her own dress, my lord."

"Was

“Was it a man’s or a woman’s dress?”
Asked his lordship with the same commanding look.

“Ha, ha, my lord,” (half laughing and half crying,) “a woman’s dress to be sure, my lord.”

On which Sandford cried,

“Call the footman up, and let him confront her.”

He was called; but lord Elmwood, now disgusted with the scene, sat down at the farther end of the room, and left Sandford to question them.

With all the authority and consequence of a country magistrate, Sandford with his back to the fire and the witnesses before him, began with the footman.

“In what dress do you say, you saw your lady, when you attended, and went along with her, to the masquerade?”

“In mens cloaths,” replied the man, boldly and firmly as before.

“Bless my soul, George, how can you say such a thing?” cried the woman.

“In what dress, do *you* say she went in?” cried Sandford to her.

“In women’s cloaths, indeed, Sir.”

“This is very odd!” said Mrs Horton.

"Had she on, or had she not on, a coat?" asked Sandford.

"Yes, Sir, a petticoat, replied the woman.

"Do *you* say she had on a petticoat?" Said Sandford to the man.

"I can't answer exactly for that," replied he, "but I know she had boots on."

"They were not boots," replied the maid, with vehemence, "indeed, Sir, (turning to Sandford) they were only half boots."

"My girl," said Sandford, kindly to her, "your own evidence convicts her. —What has a woman to do with *any* boots?"

Impatient at this mummary, lord Elmwood rose from his seat, and ordered the servants out of the room; and then looking at his watch, found it was near one. "At what time am I to expect her at home?" said he.

"Perhaps not till three in the morning." Answered Mrs. Horton.

"Three! six, more likely." cried Sandford.

"I can't wait with patience till that time," answered his lordship with a most anxious sigh.

“ You had better go to bed, my lord,” said Mrs. Horton, “ and by sleeping, the time will pass away unperceived.”

“ If I *could* sleep, madam,” returned he.

“ Will you play a game of cards, my lord?” said Sandford, “ for I will not leave you till she comes home ; and though I am not used to sit up all night ——”

“ All night,” repeated his lordship, “ she durst not stay all night.”

“ And yet, after going,” said Sandford, “ in defiance to your commands, I should suppose she dares ?”

“ She is in good company, at least, my lord,” said Mrs. Horton.

“ She does not know herself, what company she is in,” replied his lordship.

“ How should she ?” cried Sandford, “ where every one hides his face.”

Till five o'clock in the morning, in such conversation as this, the hours passed away.—Mrs. Horton, indeed, retired to her chamber at two ; and left the gentlemen to a graver discourse, but a discourse still less advantageous to poor Miss Milner.

She, during this time, was at the scene of pleasure she had pictured to herself, and

all the pleasure it gave her was, that she was sure she should never desire to go to a masquerade again.—The crowd and bustle fatigued her—the freedom offended her delicacy—and though she perceived she was the first object of admiration in the place, yet there was one person still wanting to admire; and the remorse at having transgressed his injunctions for so trivial an entertainment, weighed upon her spirits, and added to its weariness.—She would have come away sooner than she did, but she could not, with any degree of good manners, leave the company with whom she went, and not till half after four were they prevailed on to return.

Day-light just peeped through the shutters of the room where his lordship and Sandford were sitting, when the sound of her carriage, and its sudden stop at the door, caused Lord Elmwood as suddenly to start from his seat.—He trembled extremely, and looked pale.—Sandford was ashamed to seem to notice it, yet he could not help asking him, “To take a glass of wine.”—He took it—and for once evinced he was reduced so low, as to be *glad* of such a resource.

What

What passion thus agitated Lord Elmwood at this crisis, it is hard to define.— Perhaps it was indignation at Miss Milner's imprudence, and the satisfaction he felt at being on the point of revenge—perhaps his emotion arose from joy, to find she was safe—perhaps it was perturbation at the regret he felt that he must upbraid her—perhaps it was one alone of these sensations, but most probably, it was them all combined.

She, wearied out with the tedious night's dissipation, and less joyous than melancholy, had fallen asleep as she rode home, and when the carriage stopt, came half asleep out of it.—“ Light me to my bed-chamber instantly,” said she to her woman, who waited in the hall to receive her.—But one of Lord Elmwood's valets went up to her, and answered, “ Madam, my Lord desires to see you before you go to bed.”

“ Your lord, man?” cried she, “ Is he not out of town?”

“ No, madam, my lord has been at home ever since you went out, and has been sitting up with Mr. Sandford, waiting for your return.”

She was wide awake instantly.—The heaviness was removed from her eyes, but fear, grief, and shame seized upon her heart.—She leaned against her woman, as if unable to support herself under those feelings, and said to Miss Woodley.

“ Make my excuse—I can’t see him to night—I am unfit—indeed I cannot.”

Miss Woodley was alarmed at the thought of going to him by herself, and thus perhaps aggravating him still more; she therefore said, “ He has sent for you; for heaven’s sake, do not disobey him a second time.”

“ No, dear madam,” cried her woman, “ for he is like a lion—he has been scolding me.”

“ Good God!” exclaimed Miss Milner, (and in a tone that seemed prophetic) “ Then he is not to be my husband, after all.”

“ Yes,” cried Miss Woodley, “ if you will only be humble, and appear sorry.—You know your power over him, and all may yet be well.”

She turned her speaking eyes upon her friend, the tears starting from them, her lips

lips trembling ; “ Do I not appear sorry ? ” she cried.

The bell at that moment rung furiously, and they mended their pace to the door of the apartment where his lordship was.

“ No, this is only fright,”—replied Miss Woodley, “ Say to him you are sorry, and beg his pardon.”

“ I cannot,” said she, “ if Mr. Sandford is with him.”

The servant opened the door, and she and Miss Woodley went in.—Lord Elmwood by this time was composed, and received her with a slight inclination of his head ; she bowed to him in return, and said, with some marks of humility,

“ I suppose, my lord, I have done wrong.”

“ You have indeed, Miss Milner ; answered he, “ but do not suppose, I mean to upbraid you ; I am, moreover, going to release you from any such apprehension *for the future.*”

Those last three words he spoke with a countenance so serious and so determined, with an accent so firm and so decided, they pierced through her heart.—She did not however weep, or even sigh ; but her

friend, Miss Woodley, knowing what she felt, exclaimed, "Oh!" as if for her.

She herself strove with her anguish, and replied, (but with a faltering voice) "I expect as much, my lord."

"Then, madam, you may perhaps expect all that I intend?"

"In regard to myself," she replied, "I suppose I do."

"Then," said he, "you may expect in a few days we shall part."

"I am prepared for it, my lord," she answered, and while she said so, sunk upon a chair.

"My lord, what you have to say farther," said Miss Woodley, in tears, "defer till the morning. Miss Milner, you see is not able to bear it now."

"I have nothing to say farther," replied he, coolly, "I have now only to act."

"Lord Elmwood," cried Miss Milner, divided between grief and anger, "you think to frighten me by your menaces, but I can part with you; heaven knows I can—your late behaviour has reconciled me to a separation."

On this he was going out of the room—but Miss Woodley, catching hold of him

him

him, cried, "Oh! my lord, do not leave her in this sorrow—pity her weakness, and forgive it."—She was proceeding, and he seemed inclined to listen to her, when Sandford called out in so sharp a tone.

"Miss Woodley, what do you mean?" she gave a start, and desisted.

His lordship turned to Sandford and said, "Nay, Mr. Sandford, you need entertain no doubts of me; I have judged, and have deter——"

He was going to say determined; but Miss Milner, who dreaded to hear the word, interrupted the period, and exclaimed, "Oh! could my poor father know the grief, the days of sorrow, I have experienced since his death, how would he repent his fatal choice in a protector!"

This sentence, wherein his friend's memory was recalled, with the additional allusion to her long and secret affection for himself, affected Lord Elmwood much—he was moved, but ashamed of being so and as soon as possible, conquered the propensity.—Yet, for a short interval, he did not know whether to go out of the
room

room, or to remain in it ; whether to speak or to be silent.—At length he turned towards her and said,

“ Appeal to your father in some other form, in that (pointing to her dress) he will not know you.—Reflect upon him too in your moments of dissipation, and let his idea controul your indiscretions—not merely in an hour of contradiction call peevishly upon his name, only to wound the dearest friend you have.”

There was a degree of truth, and a degree of feeling, in the conclusion of this speech, that alarmed Sandford, and he caught up one of the candles, and laying hold of his lordship's elbow, drew him out of the room, crying, “ Come, my lord, come to your bed-chamber, it is very late—it is morning—it is time to rise.” And by a continual repetition of these words, in a very loud voice, drowned whatever his lordship, or any other person, might have wished to have spoken or heard.—In this manner, Lord Elmwood was taken out of the apartment, and the evening's entertainment concluded.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TWO whole days passed in the bitterest suspense on the part of Miss Milner, while neither one word or look from Lord Elmwood, denoted the most trivial change of those sentiments he had declared on the night of the masquerade.—Still those sentiments, or intentions, were not explicitly delivered; they were more like intimations, than solemn declarations—for though he had said, “He would never reproach her *for the future*,” and that “she might expect they should part,” he had not positively said they should; and upon this doubtful meaning of his words, she hung with the strongest agitation of hope, and of fear.

Miss Woodley seeing the distress of her mind, (much as she endeavoured to conceal it) entreated, nay implored, of her, to permit her to be a mediator; to suffer her to ask for a private interview with Lord Elmwood, and provided she found him inflexible, behave with a proper degree of spirit in return; but if he appear-
ed

ed not absolutely averse to a reconciliation, to offer it to him in so cautious a manner, it might take place without farther uneasiness on either side. But Miss Milner peremptorily forbade this, and acknowledging to her friend every weakness she felt on the occasion, yet concluded with solemnly declaring, "That after what had passed between her and Lord Elmwood, *he* must be the first to make a concession, before she herself would condescend to be reconciled."

"I believe, I know Lord Elmwood's temper," replied Miss Woodley, "and I do not think he will be easily induced to beg pardon for a fault, which he thinks you have committed."

"Then he does not love me."

"Pshaw! Miss Milner, this is the old argument.—He may love you too well to spoil you—consider he is your guardian as well as your lover, he means also to become your husband; and he is a man of such nice honour, he will not give you a specimen of that power before marriage, which he does not intend to submit to hereafter."

"But tenderness, affection, the politeness due from a lover to his mistress, demands

mands this submission ; and as I now despair of enticing, I will oblige him to it—at least I'll make the trial, and know my fate at once.

“What do you mean to do?”

“Invite my Lord Frederick to the house, and ask my guardian's consent for our immediate union ; you will then see, what effect that has upon his pride.”

“But you will then make it too late for him to be humble.—If you resolve on this, my dear Miss Milner, you are undone at once—you may thus hurry yourself into a marriage with a man you do not love, and the misery of your whole future life may be the result.—Or, would you force Mr. Dorriforth (I mean Lord Elmwood) to another duel with my lord Frederick?”

“No, call him Dorriforth—” answered she, with the tears stealing from her eyes, “I thank you for calling him so ; for by that name alone, is he dear to me.”

“Nay, Miss Milner, with what rapture did you not receive his love, as Lord Elmwood?”

“But under that title he has been barbarous ; under the first, he was all friendship and tenderness.

Not-

Notwithstanding Miss Milner indulged herself in all those soft bewailings to her friend—before Lord Elmwood she maintained a degree of pride and steadiness which surprised even him, who had perhaps ever thought less of her love for him, than any other person.—She now began to fear she had gone too far in discovering her affection, and resolved to make trial of a contrary method.—She determined to retrieve that haughty character which had inspired so many of her admirers with passion, and take the chance of the effect upon this only one, to whom she ever acknowledged a mutual love.—But although she acted this character well—so well, that every one but Miss Woodley thought her in earnest—yet, with the nicest and most attentive anxiety, did she watch even the slightest circumstance, that might revive her hopes, or confirm her despair. Lord Elmwood's behaviour was calculated to produce the latter—he was cold, polite, and perfectly indifferent.—Yet, whatever his manners now were, they did not remove from her recollection what they had been—she recalled, with delight, the ardour with which he had first declared his
passion

passion to her, and the thousand proofs he had since given of its reality.—From the constancy of his disposition, she depended a great deal, that those sentiments were not totally eradicated ; and from the extreme desire, which Mr. Sandford now, more than ever, discovered to depreciate her in his patron's esteem—from the now, more than common earnestness, with which he never failed to take Lord Elmwood from her company, whenever he had it in his power, she was led to believe, that while his friend entertained such strong fears of his lordship relapsing into love, she had reason to indulge the strongest hopes that he would.

But the reserve, and indifference she had so well assumed for a few days, and which might, perhaps, have effected her designs, she had not the patience to persevere in, without calling levity to their aid.—She visited repeatedly without saying where, or with whom—kept later hours than usual—appeared in the highest spirits; sung, laugh'd, and never heaved a sigh, but when she was alone.

Still

Still, Lord Elmwood protracted a resolution, he was determined not to break when once taken.

Miss Woodley was extremely uneasy, and with cause; she saw her friend was providing herself with a weight of cares, she would soon find too much for her strength to bear—she would have reasoned with her, but all her arguments had long since proved unavailing.—She strongly wished to speak to Lord Elmwood upon the subject, and (unknowing to her) plead her excuse; but he apprehended Miss Woodley's intention and evidently shunned her.—Mr. Sandford was now the only person to whom he could speak of Miss Milner, and the delight he took to expatiate on her faults, was more sorrow to her friend, than not to speak of her at all. She, therefore, sat a silent spectator, waiting with dread for that time, when she, who now scorned her advice, would fly to her in vain for comfort.

Sandford had, however, said one thing to Miss Woodley, which gave her a ray of hope. During their conversation on this subject (not by way of consolation to her, but as a reproach to Lord Elmwood), he
one

one day angrily exclaimed, "And yet, notwithstanding all his provocation, he has not come to the determination to think no more of her—he lingers and hesitates—I never saw him so weak upon any occasion before."

This was joyful hearing to Miss Woodley; still, she could not but reflect, the longer he was in coming to this determination, the more irrevocable it would be, when once taken; and every moment she passed, she trembled lest that should be the moment, in which Lord Elmwood resolved to banish Miss Milner from his heart.

Among the unpardonable indiscretions, she was guilty of during this trial upon the temper of her guardian, was the frequent mention of many gentlemen, who had been her profest admirers, and mentioning them with partiality.—Teased, if not tortured by this, Lord Elmwood still behaved with a manly evenness of temper, and neither appeared provoked on the subject, or insolently careless.—In a single instance, however, this calmness had nearly deserted him.

Entering the drawing-room, one evening, he suddenly started, on seeing Lord
Frede.

Frederick Lawnley there, in earnest conversation with Miss Milner.

Mrs. Horton and Miss Woodley were indeed present, and Lord Frederick was talking in an audible voice, and upon some indifferent subjects; but with that impressive manner, in which a man never fails to speak to the woman he loves, be the subject what it will.—The moment Lord Elmwood started, which was the moment he entered, Lord Frederick arose.

“I beg your pardon, my lord,” said Lord Elmwood, “I protest I did not know you.”

“I ought to entreat your lordship’s pardon,” returned Lord Frederick, “for this intrusion, which an accident alone has occasioned. Miss Milner has been nearly overturned, by the carelessness of a lady’s coachman, in whose carriage she was, and therefore suffered me to bring her home in mine.”

“I hope you are not hurt,” said Lord Elmwood to Miss Milner, but his voice was so much affected, by what he felt, he could scarcely articulate the words.—Not with the apprehension she was hurt, was he thus agitated, for the gaiety of her
manner

manner convinced him that could not be the case, nor did he indeed suppose any accident, such as was mentioned, had occurred; but the circumstance of unexpectedly seeing Lord Frederick had taken him off his guard, and being totally unprepared, he could not conquer those signs of surprise, and the shock it had given him.

Lord Frederick, who had heard nothing of his intended union with his ward, (for it was even kept a secret, at present, from every servant in the house) imputed this discomposure, to the personal resentment his lordship might bear him, in consequence of their duel; for, notwithstanding Lord Elmwood had assured the uncle of Lord Frederick, (who once waited upon him on the subject of Miss Milner) that all resentment was, on his part, entirely at an end; and that he was willing to consent to the lady's marriage with his nephew, if she herself would concur, yet Lord Frederick doubted the sincerity of this, and would still have had the delicacy not to have entered his lordship's house, but, encouraged by Miss Milner, and emboldened by his love. Personal resentment was then the construction he put upon
on

on Lord Elmwood's emotion on entering the room, but Miss Milner and Miss Woodley knew his agitation to arise from a far different cause.

After his entrance, Lord Frederick did not attempt to resume his seat, but bowing most respectfully to all present, took his leave; while Miss Milner followed him, as far as the door, repeating her thanks and gratitude for his protection.

Lord Elmwood was hurt beyond measure; but he had a second concern, and that was, he had not the power to conceal how much he was affected.—He trembled—when he attempted to speak, he stammered—he perceived his face burning with the blood that had flushed to it from confusion, and thus one confusion gave birth to another, till his state was pitiable.

Miss Milner with all her assumed gaiety and real insolence, had not, however, the insolence to seem to observe his situation; she had only the confidence to observe it by stealth.—And Mrs. Horton and Miss Woodley, having opportunely begun a discourse upon some trivial occurrences, gave him time to recover himself by degrees—yet, still it was merely by degrees,
for

for the impression this incident had made, was deep, and not easily to be erased.—The entrance of Mr. Sandford, who knew nothing of what had happened, was also some relief, and his lordship and he entered into conversation, which they very soon retired into the library to terminate.—Miss Milner, taking Miss Woodley with her, went directly to her own apartment, and there exclaimed to her friend, in rapture,

“He is mine—he loves me—and he is mine for ever.”

Miss Woodley congratulated her upon believing so, but confessed, she herself, “had her fears.”

“What fears?” cried Miss Milner, “don’t you perceive he loves me?”

“I do,” said Miss Woodley, “but that, I always supposed; and, I think, if he loves you now, he has still the good sense to know, he has cause to hate you.”

“What has good sense to do with love?” returned Miss Milner, “If a lover of mine suffers his understanding to get the better of his affection——”

And the same arguments were again going to be repeated, but Miss Woodley interrupted

interrupted her, by requiring an explanation of her conduct, not in respect to her guardian, but to Lord Frederick; whom, at least, she must allow, she was treating with cruelty, if she only made use of his affection, to stimulate that of Lord Elmwood's.

“By no means, my dear Miss Woodley,”—returned she—“I have, indeed, done with my Lord Frederick from this day; and he has certainly given me the proof I wanted of Lord Elmwood's love; but then, I did not engage him to this, by the smallest degree of hope.—No, do not suspect me of that, while my heart was another's.—And I assure you, seriously, it was from the circumstance we described, that he came with me home—yet, I must own, that had I not had this design upon Lord Elmwood's jealousy in idea, I would have walked on foot through the streets, rather than have suffered his rival's civilities.—But he pressed his services so violently, and my Lady Evans (in whose chariot I was, when the accident happened) pressed me so violently to accept them, that he cannot expect any farther meaning from
my

my acquiescence, than my own convenience.”

Miss Woodley was going to reply, when she resumed,

“Nay, if you intend to say I have done wrong, still I am not sorry for it, while it has given me such convincing proofs of Lord Elmwood’s love.—Did you see him? I am afraid you did not see how he trembled?—and that manly, firm voice faltered, as mine does sometimes—his proud heart was humbled too; as mine is sometimes.—Oh! Miss Woodley, I have been counterfeiting indifference to *him*; I now find all *his* indifference has been counterfeited too, and we not only love, but we love equally.”

“Supposing this, all as you hope; I yet think it highly necessary, your guardian should be informed, seriously informed, that it was mere accident, (for, at present, that plea seems but as a subterfuge) which brought Lord Frederick hither.”

“No, that will be destroying the work so successfully begun.—I will not suffer any explanation to take place, but let my Lord Elmwood act just as his love shall dictate;

and now I have no longer a doubt of its excess, instead of stooping to him, I wait in the certain expectation, of his submission to me."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN vain, for three long days, did Miss Milner wait impatiently for this submission; not a sign, not a symptom appeared—nay, Lord Elmwood had, since the evening of Lord Frederick's visit, (which at the time it happened, seemed to affect him so exceedingly) become just the same man he was before the circumstance occurred; except, indeed, something less thoughtful, and now and then cheerful; but without the smallest appearance, that his cheerfulness was affected.—Miss Milner was vexed; she was alarmed; but was ashamed to confess those humiliating sensations, even to Miss Woodley—she assumed, therefore, the vivacity she had so long assumed, but gave way, when alone, to a still greater degree of melancholy than usual. She no longer

longer applauded her scheme of bringing Lord Frederick to the house, and trembled, lest, on some pretence; he should dare to call again. But as these were feelings her pride would not suffer her to disclose to her friend, who would have consoled along with her, their effects were doubly poignant.

Sitting in her dressing-room, one forenoon with Miss Woodley, and burthened with a load of grief, she blushed to acknowledge; while her companion was charged with apprehensions she was as loath to disclose; one of Lord Elmwood's valets tapped gently at the door, and delivered a letter to Miss Milner.—By the person who brought it, as well as by the address, she knew it came from Lord Elmwood, and laid it down upon her toilet, as if fearful to unfold it.

“What is that?” said Miss Woodley.

“A letter from my guardian,” replied Miss Milner.

“Good Heaven!” exclaimed Miss Woodley.

“Nay,” returned she, “it is, I have no doubt, to beg my pardon.” But her

reluctance to open it, plainly evinced she did not think so.

“Do not read it yet,” said Miss Woodley.

I do not intend,” replied she, trembling extremely.

“Will you dine first?” said Miss Woodley.

“No—for not knowing its contents, I shall not know how to conduct myself towards him.”

Here a silence ensued—during this silence, Miss Milner took up the letter—looked earnestly at the hand-writing on the outside—at the seal—inspected into its folds—and seemed to wish, by some equivocal method, to guess at the contents, without daring to come at the certain knowledge of them.

Curiosity, at length, got the better of her fears; she opened the letter, and scarce able to hold it while she read, read the following words:

“Madam,

“While I considered you only as my
“Ward, my friendship for you was un-
“bounded—when I looked upon you as a
“woman formed to grace a fashionable
“circle

“ circle, my admiration equalled my friendship—and when fate permitted me to behold you in the tender light of my betrothed wife, my soaring love left those humbler passions at a distance.

“ That you still have my friendship, my admiration, and even my love, I will not attempt to deceive either myself or you, by disavowing; but still, with a firm assurance, I declare, Prudence outweighs them all, and I have not, from henceforward, a wish to be regarded by you in any other respect, than as one “ ‘ who wishes you well.’—That you ever beheld me in the endearing quality of a destined, and an affectionate husband, (such as I would have proved) my hopes, my vanity, own the deception, and are humiliated—but I entreat you to spare their farther trial, and for a single week, do not insult me with the open preference of another.—In the space of that time, I shall have taken my leave of you *for ever.*

“ I shall visit Italy, and some other countries for a few years, till I become once more reconciled to the change of state I am enjoined; a change, I now

“ most fervently wish could be entirely dispensed with.

“ The occasion of my remaining in England a week longer, is to settle some necessary affairs, but chiefly that of delivering to a friend, a man of worth and tenderness, all those writings, which have invested me with the power of my guardianship—he will, the day after my departure (without one upbraiding word) resign them to you in my name; and even your father, could he behold the resignation, would concur in its propriety.

“ And now, my dear Miss Milner, let not affected resentment, contempt, or levity oppose that serenity, which, for the week to come, I wish to enjoy.—By complying with this request, give me to believe, that since you have been under my care, you think I have, at least, faithfully discharged some part of my duty.—And wherever I have been inadequate to your wishes, attribute my demerits to some infirmity of mind, rather than to a negligence of your happiness.—Yet, be the cause what it will, since

“ since these faults have existed, I acknowledge them, and beg your pardon.

“ However, time and succession of objects, may eradicate more tender sentiments ; I am sure *never* to lose the liveliest anxiety for your welfare—and with all that solicitude, which I cannot describe, I entreat for your own sake, for mine—when we shall be far asunder—and for the sake of your dead father’s memory, *call upon every important occasion, your serious judgment to direct you.*

“ I am, Madam,

“ your sincerest friend,

“ ELMWOOD.”

After reading every syllable of this letter, it dropped from Miss Milner’s hands ; but she uttered not a word.—There was, however, a paleness in her face, a deadness in her eye, and a kind of palsy over her frame, which Miss Woodley, who had seen her in every stage of her uneasiness, never had seen before.

“ I do not want to read the letter,” said Miss Woodley, “ your looks tell me its contents.”

“ They will then discover to Lord Elmwood,” replied she, “ what I feel ; but

heaven forbid—that would sink me even lower than I am.”

Scarce able to crawl, she rose, and looked in the glass, as if to arrange her features, so as to impose upon him: alas! this was of no avail; a serenity of mind, could, alone, effect what she desired.

“ You must endeavour,” said Miss Woodley, “ to feel that disposition, you wish to make appear.”

“ I will,” replied she, “ I will feel a proper pride—and a proper scorn of this treatment.

And so desirous was she to attain the appearance of these sentiments, she made the strongest efforts to calm her thoughts, in order to acquire it.

“ I have but a few days to remain with him,” she said to herself, “ and we part for ever—in those few days, it is not only my duty to obey his commands, or rather comply with his request, but it is also my wish to leave upon his mind, an impression, which may not add to the ill opinion he has formed of me, but, perhaps, serve to diminish it.—If, in every other instance my conduct has been blameable, he shall, at least in this, acknowledge its merit.—

The

The fate I have drawn upon myself, he shall find I can be resigned to; and he shall be convinced, that the woman, of whose weakness he has had so many fatal proofs, is yet in possession of some fortitude—fortitude to bid him farewell without discovering one affected, or one real pang, though her death should be the immediate consequence.”

Thus she resolved, and thus she acted.—The severest judge could not have arraigned her conduct from the day she received Lord Elmwood’s letter, to the day of his departure.—She had, indeed, involuntary weaknesses, but none with which she did not struggle, and in general her struggles were victorious.

The first time she saw him after the receipt of his letter, was on the evening of the same day—she had a little concert of amateurs in music, and was, herself, singing and playing when he entered the room; the connoisseurs immediately perceived she lost the tune, but Lord Elmwood was no connoisseur in the art, and did not observe it.

They occasionally spoke to each other during the evening, but the subjects were

general—and though their manners every time they spoke were perfectly polite, they were not tinged with the smallest degree of familiarity.—To describe his behaviour exactly, it was the same as his letter, polite, friendly, composed, and resolved.—Some of the company staid supper, which prevented the embarrassment that must unavoidably have arisen, had the family been by themselves.

The next morning each breakfasted in their separate apartments—more company dined with them, and in the evening, and at supper, Lord Elmwood was from home.

Thus all passed on as peaceably as he had requested, and Miss Milner had not betrayed one particle of frailty; when, the third day at dinner, some gentlemen of his acquaintance being at table, one of them said,

“And so, my lord, you absolutely set off on Tuesday morning?”

This was Friday.

Sandford, and he both replied at the same time, “Yes,” and Sandford, but not Lord Elmwood, looked at Miss Milner when he spoke.—Her knife and fork
gave

gave a sudden spring in her hand, but no other emotion witnessed what she felt.

“ Ay, Elmwood,” cried another gentleman at table, “ you’ll bring home, I am afraid, a foreign wife, and that I shan’t forgive.”

“ It is his errand abroad, I make no doubt,” said another visitor.

Before his lordship could return an answer, Sandford cried, “ And what objection to a foreigner for a wife? do not crowned heads all marry foreigners? and who happier in the marriage state than some kings?”

Lord Elmwood directed his eyes to the side of the table, opposite to that where Miss Milner sat.

“ Nay,” (answered one of the guests, who was a country gentleman) “ what do you say, ladies—do you think my lord ought to go out of his own nation for a wife?” and he looked at Miss Milner, for the reply.

Miss Woodley, uneasy at her friend’s being thus forced to give an opinion upon so delicate a subject, endeavoured to satisfy the gentleman, by answering to the question herself: “ Whoever my Lord Elmwood

wood marries, Sir," said Miss Woodley, "he, no doubt, will be happy."

"But what say you, young lady?" asked the gentleman, still keeping his eyes on Miss Milner.

"That whoever his lordship marries, he *deserves* to be happy," returned she, with the utmost command of her voice and looks; for Miss Woodley, by replying first, had given her time to collect herself.

The colour flew to Lord Elnwood's face, as she delivered this short sentence; and Miss Woodley flattered herself, she saw a tear start in his eye.

Miss Milner did not look that way.

In an instant his lordship found means to change the subject, but that of his journey still employed the conversation; and what horses, servants, and carriage he took with him, was minutely asked, and so accurately answered either by himself or by Mr. Sandford, that Miss Milner, although she had beheld her doom before, till now had received no circumstantial account of it—and as circumstances add to, or diminish all we feel, hearing these things told, increased the bitterness of their truth.

Soon

Soon after dinner, the ladies retired, and from that time, though Miss Milner's behaviour still continued the same, yet her looks and her voice were totally altered—for the world, she could not have looked cheerfully; for the world, she could not have spoken with a sprightly accent; she frequently began in one, but not three words had she uttered, before her tones sunk into the flattest dejection.—Not only her colour, but her features became changed; her eyes lost their brilliancy, her lips seemed to hang without the power of motion, her head drooped, and her dress was wholly neglected.—Conscious of this distressed appearance, and conscious of the weakness from whence it arose, it was her desire to hide herself from the only object she could have wished to have charmed.—Accordingly, she sat alone, or with Miss Woodley in her own apartment, as much as was consistent with that civility her guardian had requested, and which forbade her from totally absenting herself.

Miss Woodley felt so acutely the torments of her friend, that had not her reason told her the inflexible mind of Lord Elmwood was fixed beyond her power to shake, she
had

had cast herself at his feet, and implored the return of his affection and tenderness as the only means to save his once beloved ward from an untimely grave. But her understanding—her knowledge of Lord Elmwood's firm and immoveable temper; and all his grievous provocations—her knowledge of his word, long since given to Sandford, "That if once resolved, he would not recall his resolution."—The certainty of the many plans that had been arranged for his travels, all agreed to convince her, that by any interference, she only exposed Miss Milner's tenderest love and delicacy to a contemptuous rejection.

If the conversation did not every day turn upon the subject of Lord Elmwood's departure—a conversation he evidently avoided himself—yet every day some new preparation for his journey, struck the ear or the eye of Miss Milner—and had she beheld a frightful spectre, she could not have shuddered with more horror, than when she unexpectedly passed his large trunks in the hall, nailed and corded, ready to be sent off to meet him at Venice.—At the sight, she flew from the company that happened to be along with her, and stole to
the

the first lonely corner of the house to conceal her tears—she reclined her head upon her hands, and bedewed them with the sudden anguish that had overcome her.—She heard a footstep advancing towards the spot where she hoped to have concealed; she lifted up her eyes, and beheld Lord Elmwood.—Pride was the first emotion his presence inspired—pride, which arose from the humility into which she was plunged.

She instantly stifled her tears, and looked at him earnestly, as if to imply, “What now my, lord?”

He only answered with a bow, which expressed these words alone: “I beg your pardon.” And immediately withdrew.

Thus each understood the other’s language, without either uttering a word.

The just construction, which she put upon his looks and behaviour upon this occasion, kept up her spirits for some little time; and she blessed heaven, repeatedly, for the singular favour of shewing to her, clearly, by this accident, his negligence of her sorrows, his total indifference.

The next day was the eve of that, on which he was to depart—and the one on
which

which she was to bid adieu to Dorriforth, to her guardian, to Lord Elmwood ; to all her hopes at once.

The moment she awoke on Monday morning, the recollection, that this was, perhaps, the last day she was ever again to see him, softened all the resentment his yesterday's conduct had given birth to, and forgetting his austerity, and all she once termed, cruelties ; she now only remembered his friendship, his anxious tenderness, and his love.—She was impatient to behold him, and promised to herself, for this last day, to neglect no one opportunity of being with him. For that purpose she did not breakfast in her own room, as she had done for several mornings before, but went into the breakfastroom, where all the family generally met.—She was rejoiced on hearing his voice as she opened the door, yet the sound made her tremble so much, she could scarcely totter to the table.

Miss Woodley looked at her as she entered, and was never so much shocked at seeing her ; for never had she yet seen her look so ill.—As she approached, she made an inclination of her head to Mrs. Horton,
and

and then to her guardian, as was her custom, when she first saw them in a morning—his lordship looked in her face as he bowed, then turned his eyes upon the fire place, rubbed his forehead, and began talking with Mr. Sandford.

Sandford, during breakfast, by accident, cast his eyes upon Miss Milner; his attention was caught by her deathly countenance, and he looked earnestly.—He then turned to Lord Elmwood to see if he was observing her appearance—he was not—and so much were her thoughts engaged on him alone, she did not once perceive Sandford gazing at her.

Mrs. Horton after a little while observed, “It was a beautiful morning”

Lord Elmwood said, “He thought he heard it rain in the night.”

Sandford cried, “For his part he slept too well to know.” And then (unasked) held a plate with biscuits to Miss Milner—it was the first civility he had ever in his life offered her; she smiled at the whimsicality of the circumstance, but took one in return for his attention.—He looked grave beyond his usual gravity, and yet not with his usual ill temper. She did not

eat

eat what she had so politely taken, but laid it down soon after.

Lord Elmwood was the first who rose from breakfast, and did not return to dinner.

At dinner, Mrs. Horton said, "She hoped his lordship would, however, favour them with his company at supper."

To which Sandford replied, "No doubt, for you will hardly any of you see him in the morning; as we shall be off by six, or soon after."

Sandford was not going abroad with Lord Elmwood, but was to go with him as far as Dover.

These words of his—"not see Lord Elmwood in the morning"—[never again to see him after this evening,] were like the knell of death to Miss Milner.—She felt the symptoms of fainting, and eagerly snatched a glass of wine, which the servant was holding to Sandford, (who had called for wine) and drank a part of it.—As she returned the glass to the servant, she began to apologize to Mr. Sandford for her seeming rudeness, but before she could utter what she meant, he said, good-naturedly, "Never mind—you are very welcome—

I am

I am glad you took it."—She looked at him to observe, whether he had really spoken kindly, or ironically; but before his countenance could satisfy her, her thoughts were away from that trivial circumstance, and again fixed upon Lord Elmwood.

The moments seemed tedious till he came home to supper, and yet, when she reflected for how short a time the rest of the evening would continue, she wished to defer the hour of his return, for months.—At ten o'clock he arrived, and at half after ten the family, without any visitor, met at supper.

Miss Milner had considered, that the period for her to counterfeit appearances, was diminished now to a very short one; and she rigourously enjoined herself not to shrink from that little which remained.—The certain end, that would be so soon put to this painful deception, encouraged her to struggle through it with redoubled zeal; and this was but necessary, as her weakness encreased.—She therefore listened, she talked, and even smiled with the rest of the company, nor did their vivacity seem

seem to arise from a much less compulsive source than her own.

It was past twelve, when Lord Elmwood looked at his watch, and rising from his seat, went up to Mrs. Horton, and taking her hand, said, "Till I see you again, madam, I sincerely wish you every happiness."

Miss Milner fixed her eyes upon the table before her.

"My lord," replied Mrs. Horton, "I sincerely wish you health and happiness likewise."

He then went to Miss Woodley, and taking her hand, repeated much the same, as he had said to Mrs. Horton.

Miss Milner now trembled beyond all power of concealment.

"My lord," replied Miss Woodley, a good deal affected, "I sincerely hope my prayers for your happiness may be heard."

She and Mrs. Horton were both standing as well as his lordship; but Miss Milner kept her seat, till his eye was turned upon her, and he moved slowly towards her; she then rose—and every one who was present attentive to what he would now say, and how she would receive what he said,
cast

cast their eyes upon them, and listened with impatience.—They were all disappointed—he did not utter a syllable.—Yet he took her hand, and held it closely between his.—He then bowed most respectfully, and left her.

No, “ I wish you well ;—I wish you health and happiness.” No “ Prayers for blessings on her.”—Not even the word “ farewell,” escaped his lips—perhaps, to have attempted any of these, might have choaked his utterance.

She had behaved with fortitude the whole evening, and she continued to do so, till the moment he turned away from her.—Her eyes then overflowed with tears, and in the agony of her mind, not knowing what she did, she laid her cold hand upon the person next to her—it happened to be Sandford ; but not observing it was him, she grasped his hand with violence—yet he did not snatch it away, nor look at her with his wonted severity.—And thus she stood, silent and motionless, while his lordship lighted a candle, he took from the side-board, bowed once more to all the company, and retired.

Sandford

Sandford had still Miss Milner's hand fixed upon his; and when the door was shut after Lord Elmwood, he turned his head to look in her face, and turned it with some marks of apprehension for the grief he might find there.—She strove to overcome that grief, and after a heavy sigh, sat down, as if resigned to the fate to which she was decreed.

Instead of following Lord Elmwood, as usual, Sandford poured out a glass of wine, and drank it.—A general silence ensued for near three minutes.—At last turning himself round on his seat, towards Miss Milner, who sat like a statue of despair at his side, “Will you breakfast with us to-morrow?” said he.

She made no answer.

“We shan't breakfast before half after six,” continued he, “I dare say; and if you can rise so early—why do.”

“Miss Milner,” said Miss Woodley, (for she caught, eagerly, at the hope of her passing this night in less unhappiness than she had foreboded) “pray rise at that hour to breakfast; Mr. Sandford would not invite you, if he thought it would displease his lordship.”

“Not

“Not I,” replied Sandford churlishly.

“Then desire her woman to call her,” said Mrs. Horton to Miss Woodley.

“Nay, she will be awake, I have no doubt,” returned her niece.

“No; replied Miss Milner, “since Lord Elmwood has thought proper to take his leave of me, without even speaking a word; by my own design, never will I see him again.” And here a flood of tears burst forth, as if her heart burst at the same time.

“Why did not *you* speak to *him*?” cried Sandford—“pray did you bid *him* farewell?—and I don’t see why one is not as much to be blamed, in that respect, as the other.”

“I was too weak to say, I wished him happy;” cried Miss Milner, “but, Heaven is my witness, I do wish him so from my soul.”

“And do you imagine, he does not wish you so too?” cried Sandford.—“You should judge him by your own heart; and what you feel for him, imagine he feels for you, my dear”.

Though “*my dear*” is a trivial phrase, yet from certain people, and upon certain occasions

occasions, it is a phrase of infinite comfort and assurance.—Mr. Sandford seldom said “my dear” to any one; to Miss Milner never; and upon this occasion, and from him, it was an expression most precious.

She turned to him with a look of gratitude; but as she only looked, and did not speak, he rose up, and soon after said, with a friendly tone he had seldom spoken with in her presence, “I sincerely wish you a good night.”

As soon as he was gone, Miss Milner exclaimed, “However my fate may have been precipitated by the unkindness of Mr. Sandford, yet, for that particle of concern he has shown for me this night, I will always be grateful to him.”

“Ay,” cried Mrs. Horton, “good Mr. Sandford may show his kindness now, without any danger from its consequences.—Now his lordship is going away for ever, he is not afraid of your seeing him once again.” And she thought she praised him by this suggestion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WHEN Miss Milner retired to her bed-chamber, Miss Woodley went with her, nor would leave her the whole night—but in vain did she persuade her to go to rest, she absolutely refused; and declared she would never, from that hour, indulge the smallest repose.—“The part I undertook to perform,” cried she, “is over; I will now, for my whole life, appear in my own character, and give a loose to the anguish I endure.”

As day light showed itself, “And yet I might see him once again,” said she. “I might see him within these two hours, if I pleased, for Mr. Sandford invited me.”

“If you think, my dear Miss Milner, said Miss Woodley, “that a second parting from Lord Elmwood, would but give you a second agony, in the name of Heaven do not see him any more—but, if you think your mind would be easier, were you to bid each other adieu in a more direct manner than you did last night, let us go down and breakfast with him.—I’ll go be-

fore, to prepare him for your reception—you shall not unexpectedly surprise him—and I will let him know, it is by Mr. Sandford's invitation you are coming."

She listened with a smile to this proposal, yet objected to the indelicacy of her wishing to see him, after he had taken his leave—but as Miss Woodley, nevertheless, perceived she was inclined to infringe this delicacy, of which she had so proper a sense, she easily persuaded her, it was impossible for the most suspicious person (and Lord Elmwood was far from such a character) to suppose, that by paying him a visit at that period of time, could be with the most distant idea of regaining his heart, or of altering one resolution he had taken.

In this opinion, Miss Milner acquiesced, yet she had not the courage to come to the determination she would go.

Day light now no longer peeped, but stared broad upon them.—Miss Milner went to the looking-glass, breathed upon her hands and rubbed them on her eyes; put some powder into her hair; yet said, after all, "I dare not see him again."

"You may do as you please," said Miss Woodley, "but I will. I that have lived
for

for so many years under the same roof with him, and on the most friendly terms, and he going away, perhaps, for these ten years, perhaps for ever; I should think it a disrespect not to see him to the last moment of his remaining in the house."

"Then do you go," said Miss Milner, eagerly, "and if he should ask for me, I will gladly come, you know; but if he does not ask for me, I will not—and pray do not deceive me."

Miss Woodley gave her word not to deceive her; and soon after, as they heard the servants pass about the house, and the clock had struck six, Miss Woodley went to the breakfast-room.

She found Lord Elmwood there in his travelling dress, standing pensively by the fire place—and, as he did not dream of seeing her, he started when she entered, and with an appearance of alarm said, "Dear Miss Woodley, what's the matter?"—she replied, "Nothing, my lord; but I could not be satisfied without seeing your lordship once again, while I had it in my power."

"I thank you," he returned with a sigh, and the heaviest and most intelligent sigh,

she ever heard him condescend to give.—She imagined, also, he looked as if he wished to ask how Miss Milner did, but would not allow himself the indulgence.—She was half inclined to mention her to him, and debating in her mind whether she should or not, Mr. Sandford came into the room; saying, as he entered,

“For Heaven’s sake, my lord, where did you sleep last night?”

“Why do you ask?” said his lordship.

“Because,” replied Sandford, “I went into your bed-chamber but now, and I found your bed made.—You did not sleep there last night.”

“I have slept no where;” answered his lordship, “I could not sleep—and having some papers to look over, and to rise early, I thought I might as well not go to bed at all.”

Miss Woodley was pleased at the frank manner in which he made this confession, and could not resist the strong impulse to say, “You have done just then, my lord, like Miss Milner, for she has not been in bed the whole night.”

Miss Woodley spoke this in a negligent manner, and yet, Lord Elmwood echoed back

back the words with solicitude and tenderness, "Has not Miss Milner been in bed the whole night?"

"If she is up, why does not she come and take some coffee?" said Sandford, as he began to pour it out.

"If she thought it would be agreeable," returned Miss Woodley, "I dare say she would." And she looked at Lord Elmwood while she spoke, though she did not absolutely address him; but he made no reply.

"Agreeable!" returned Sandford, angrily, "Has she then a quarrel with any body here? or does she suppose any body here bears enmity to *her*?—Is she not in peace and charity?"

"Yes," replied Miss Woodley, "that I am sure she is."

"Then bring her here directly.—Would she have the wickedness to imagine we are not all friends with her?"

Miss Woodley left the room, and found Miss Milner almost in despair, lest she should hear Lord Elmwood's carriage drive off before her friend's return.

"Did he send for me?" were the words she uttered as soon as she saw her.

“ Mr. Sandford did, in his presence,” returned Miss Woodley, “ and you may go with the utmost decorum, or I would not tell you so.”

She required no protestations of this, but readily followed her beloved adviser, whose kindness never appeared in half the amiable light as at that moment.

On entering the room, through all the dead white of her complexion, she blushed to a crimson.—Lord Elmwood rose from his seat, and brought a chair for her to sit down.

Sandford looked at her inquisitively, then sipped his tea, and said, “ He never made tea to his own liking.”

Miss Milner took a cup, but had scarce strength to hold it.

It seemed but a very short time they were at breakfast, when the carriage, that was to take his lordship away, drove to the door.—Miss Milner started at the sound; so did he; but she had nearly dropped her cup and saucer: on which Sandford took them out of her hand, saying,

“ Perhaps, you had rather have coffee?”

Her lips moved, but he could not hear what she said.

A servant came in, and told Lord Elmwood, "the carriage was at the door."

He replied, "Very well." But though he had breakfasted, he did not attempt to move.

At last, rising briskly from his seat, as if it was necessary to go in haste, when he did go; he took up his hat, which he had brought with him into the room, and was turning to Miss Woodley to take his leave, when Sandford cried, "My lord, you are in a great hurry."—And then, as if he wished to give poor Miss Milner every moment he could, added, (looking about) "I don't know where I have laid my gloves."

His lordship, after repeating to Miss Woodley his last night's farewell, now went up to Miss Milner, and taking one of her hands, again held it between his, but still without speaking—while she, unable to suppress her tears as heretofore, suffered them to fall in torrents.

"What is all this?" cried Sandford, going up to them in anger.

They neither of them replied, or changed their situation.

"Separate this moment,"—cried Sandford—

ford—"or resolve never to be separated but by death."

The commanding and awful manner in which he spoke this sentence, made them both turn to him in amazement! and almost petrified with the sensation his words had caused.

He left them for a moment, and going to a small book-case in one corner of the room, took out of it a book, and returning with it in his hand, said,

"Lord Elmwood, do you love this woman?"

"More than my life," replied his lordship, with the most heartfelt accents.

He then turned to Miss Milner—"Can you say the same by him?"

She spread her hands over her eyes, and cried, "Oh, heavens!"

"I believe you *can* say so;" returned Sandford, "and in the name of God, and your own happiness, since this is the case, let me put it out of your power to part."

Lord Elmwood gazed at him with wonder! and yet, as if enraptured by the sudden appearance of a change in his prospects.

She

She sighed with a trembling kind of extacy ; while Sandford, with all the pomp and dignity of a clergyman in his official character, delivered these words :

“ My lord, while I thought my counsel might save you from the worst of misfortunes, conjugal strife, I importuned you hourly; and set forth your danger in the light it appeared to me.—But though old, and a priest, I can submit to think I have been in an error ; and I now firmly believe, it is for the welfare of you both, to become man and wife.—My lord, take this woman’s marriage vows ; you can ask no fairer promises of her reform ; she can give you none half so sacred, half so binding ; and I see by her looks she will mean to keep them.—And, my dear,” continued he, addressing himself to her, “ act but under the dominion of those vows, to a husband of sense and virtue, like him, and you will be all that I, himself, or even Heaven can desire.—Now then, Lord Elmwood, this moment constrain her by such ties from offending you, she shall not *dare* to violate.”

Lord Elmwood struck his forehead in doubt and agitation ; but still holding her hand,

hand, he cried, "I cannot part from her."
——Then feeling this reply as equivocal, he fell upon his knees, and cried, "Will you pardon my hesitation?—and will you, in marriage, show me that tender love you have not shown me yet?—will you, in possessing all my affections, bear with all my infirmities?"

She raised him from her feet, and by the expression of her face, the tears with which she bathed his hands, gave him confidence.

He turned to Sandford—then placing her by his own side, as the form of matrimony requires, gave this as a sign for Sandford to begin the ceremony.—On which, he opened his book and married them.

While with a countenance—manner—and voice so serious, and so fervent, did he perform these rites, that the idea of jest, or even of lightness, was far from the mind of every one present.

Miss Milner, covered with shame, sunk on the bosom of Miss Woodley.

When the ring was wanting, Lord Elmwood supplied it with one from his own hand, but throughout all the rest of the ceremony,

ceremony, appeared lost in zealous devotion to Heaven.—Yet, no sooner was it finished; than his thoughts seemed to descend to this world.—He embraced his bride with all the transport of the fondest, happiest bride-groom, and in raptures called her by the endearing name of, “wife.”

“But still, my lord,” cried Sandford, “you are only married by your own church and conscience, not by your wife’s; or by the law of the land; and let me advise you not to defer that marriage long, lest in the time you disagree, and she yet refuse to become your legal spouse.

“I think there is danger,” returned his lordship, “and therefore our second marriage must take place to-morrow.”

To this the ladies objected, and it was left to Sandford to fix their second wedding day, as he had done their first.—He, after consideration, gave four days interval.

Miss Woodley then recollected, (for every one else had forgot it) that the carriage was still at the door to convey Lord Elmwood abroad.—It was of course dismissed—and one of those great incidents of delight Miss Milner that morning tasted,

ed, was to look out of the window, and see this very carriage drive from the door unoccupied.

Never was there a more rapid change from despair to happiness—to happiness most supreme—than was that, which Miss Milner, and Lord Elmwood experienced within one single hour.

The few days that intervened between this and their legal marriage, were passed in the delightful care of preparing for that happy day—yet, with all its delights inferior to the first; when every joy was doubled by the expected sorrow.

Nevertheless, on that first wedding-day, that joyful day, which restored her lost lover to her hopes again; even on that *very* day, after the sacred ceremony was over, Miss Milner—(with all the fears, the tremors, the superstition of her sex)—felt an excruciating shock; when, looking on the ring Lord Elmwood had put upon her finger, in haste, when he married her, she perceived it was a—MOURNING RING.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



